

Lanterns have always been a part of Spring Festival, as much so as firecrackers.

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All you ever wanted to know about dumplings, but were afraid to ask.

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A renowned artist wearing a royal costume provides the highlight of a four-night series of Peking Opera classics.

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Ed Jocelyn and Andy McEwen have just passed Zunyi, Guizhou Province, in their retracing of the Long March. This week, *Beijing Today* publishes the third installment of the New Long Marchers' travel diary.

Marching into Holiday Spirit

By Andy McEwen / Ed Jocelyn

They celebrated by unit. Wang Daojin says he and a hundred others sang around a grand fire before settling down for a special Spring Festival dinner – boiled white rice and dried provisions.

Next up, a shooting contest. Wang did not make the top three and so he earned no accolades. There was not much by way of what we might call "entertainment" back in 1935. No TV variety galas then.

In today's mighty information age, men in shiny suits with no military experience, men who never marched, men who never fired a shot in anger – they especially love to ask us about "Long March spirit."

Sitting under the stars in Yunnan on Spring Festival eve (Wang forgets the place and date), it is doubtful anybody talked such airy stuff 68 years ago. The man who went on to do the entire march, to fight and see his comrades die – that is, the man best qualified to talk about such "spirit" – sits opposite us on a sofa sipping tea in his sparse Zunyi home.

He never once mentions it. "Planes were the thing," says Wang. He recalls hiding in the hills from strafing raids. It was just plain common sense to run. By January 1935, Wang was so battle-weary that fear was a forgotten emotion, he says.

Accompanying officials and TV crews sneak glances at their watches. He is a mighty fine talker, this 88-year-old, and we do not fidget at all. Let them all wait. We walked a long way for this story.

Wang mentions place names and immediately we can connect, not because of some story we read in a book or a slogan dreamed up years after the fact. We connect because we were walking the same paths only just last week.

"Night marching was better, but worse," says Wang. He means that at night there's no traffic, no planes, nobody to hassle you. It's quiet, easy. But of course at night, nobody can see a darn thing. Without flashlights, Wang and comrades somehow made it down muddy mountain tracks in the dark.

One such trail down Miaoe Shan recently killed off a pair of good hiking boots. Wang wore grass sandals. We look at Wang's feet, look at our own, shrug.

"It's just not possible," laughs Andy.

But impossible things do happen. Few people took us seriously at the start of this New Long March. Nobody would even insure us, let alone sponsor us. Now we are holding a press conference in Zunyi – without tote bags – that attracts more than 150 people.

"What do you think of Long March spirit?" immediately asks a woman holding a lollipop microphone.

Media expect a well-oiled, corporate-funded machine. We stumble into town the same ramshackle outfit we started out as, a loose assembly of friends and volunteers. And that's just the way we like it.

Maybe we don't have a sugar-daddy sponsor, maybe we will run out of cash and the credit card companies will auction our CD collections and confiscate our cats, but we have something on our side much more important than money. On February 1, Li Mingxia, Lu Sitao, Wan Xin and Su Wei all plan to come to see us, friends bearing yet more gifts and support from Beijing.

We guarantee there will be a Spring Festival celebration like no other in the history of Xu Yong County Town. We'll raise a glass of our own Long March spirit to friends new and old and to those who have emailed us at longmarchers2002@yahoo.com. These messages mean more to us than most of you can imagine. Thank you one and all, and to the readers of *Beijing Today*, happy holidays!

Beijing Today will not be published next week. We wish all our readers a happy Spring Festival. See you on Valentine's day!



Andy McEwen and Ed Jocelyn (left) take a break from marching to pose for a self portrait.

Copyright Copy Fight

Cisco sues Huawei Technologies for copying software

By Xiao Rong

A lawsuit targeting China's leading telecom equipment maker is has aroused growing concerns over the nation's lack of self-protection facing intellectual property charges.

Cisco Systems, the world's top networking equipment producer, announced on Thursday last week it has filed a lawsuit against China's Huawei Technologies, alleging copyright infringement on its Internet Operating System (IOS) software, including source code, technical documentation and several patents.

The lawsuit, filed at the US District Court in Marshall, Texas, accuses Huawei and its two American subsidiaries of having unlawfully copied and misappropriated Cisco's intellectual property.

According to the 77-page complaint, Huawei allegedly copied portions of the Cisco IOS source code and command line interface and included them in its own operating system for its Quidway routers and switches. Cisco also claims that Huawei's Quidway routers have violated at least five Cisco patents related to proprietary routing protocols.

Cisco's first complaint

Cisco's suit is its first such legal action in the company's 17-year history.

"Cisco does not take any legal action lightly. However, Huawei has unlawfully copied Cisco's intellectual property and refused Cisco's numerous attempts to resolve these issues," said Mark Chandler, Cisco vice president and general counsel in a press release, also issued Thursday. "As a result, Cisco has no choice but to protect its technology and the interests of its shareholders through legal action."

The networking giant is also seeking an injunction prohibiting Huawei from using, selling, marketing and distributing versions of its Quidway routers and switches, on the grounds that they infringe on Cisco's intellectual property. The company has not cited a specific amount for its damages claim.

"Innovation and competition are the lifeblood of our industry and must be preserved. But copying is not innovation and the misappropriation of intellectual property is not competition," Chandler continued.

Huawei has so far declined to comment on Cisco's charges, saying it is consulting with legal advisors to resolve the issue.

"Huawei and its subsidiaries have always respected the intellectual property rights of other companies and attach great importance to the protection of our own intellectual properties," says a public statement released by the company last Friday.

The statement also says that at least 10 percent of Huawei's annual income is invested in research and development, which involves over 10,000 engineers. "As a responsible company boasting our own core technologies, Huawei highly values partnership, open cooperation and fair competition that abides by local regulations, no matter where we are located," it says.

Monopoly protection

The case, described by industry analysts here as one of the largest intellectual property disputes in recent years, has attracted significant media attention.

Cisco's move is as an attempt to maintain its monopoly advantage in the global network equipment market, especially in the field of routers and switches, according to a report in the 21st Century Economic Herald on January 26.

Huawei is said to be one of Cisco's greatest potential rivals, as its Quidway routers and switches sell for almost 50 percent less than those of Cisco.

In a January 1 report by Reuters, Huawei was cited by Frank Dzubeck, president of Communications Networks Architects, as "one global worst nightmare of Cisco."

Cisco Chief Executive John Chambers also has been quoted in the past as saying that the next generation of competition for Cisco will come from such companies as Huawei Technologies and other Asian players.

But most industry analysts and executives agree the immediate impact of intense price competition on Cisco is minimal, as Cisco's profit margins hit an all-time high of 69 percent last quarter. The company has 69 per cent of the global market share in switches and 85 per cent in routers.

Although Huawei and other low-cost competitors do not pose an immediate threat to Cisco, analysts say they will inevitably squeeze Cisco's profit margins.

Ranked seventh in the Ministry of Information's 2002 China 100 Electronic Giants, Huawei reported 22 billion yuan (US \$2.66 billion) in income last year, of which US \$550 million came from its overseas market.

One of the most frequent comments in a Sina.com chat-room devoted to the issue is that Cisco launched the lawsuit against Huawei in an attempt to stop the Chinese company's planned US and global expansion.

Beijing Today emailed a series of requests for further details of the charge against Huawei to Cisco's Mark Chandler, but no reply had been received at press time.

Shangrong, the PR manager of Cisco China told *Beijing Today* that Cisco could not reveal more as the case is now before the court.

Learn to use the weapon

In the week following the announcement about the lawsuit, over 4,000 comments on the case were posted at sina.com, most expressing concern that local high-tech companies may suffer from further such obstructions from multinational rivals when attempting to break into the global market.



Photo provided by Cisco

"Cisco's accusation that Huawei has infringed its copyright is just an excuse. If Chinese companies respond only by focusing on the intellectual property rights aspect of the case, then we will absolutely lose," said renowned IT industry analyst Fang Xingdong.

In Fang's opinion, intellectual property acts as tool for technology development and may lead to inequality between developed and developed countries.

"It's true that China lacks core technologies with patents, which is a disadvantage for developing countries," he added. "But we should try to use diversified approaches, like market approval or abundant labor resources, to bargain with multinational companies so that more of our interests can be safeguarded."

Li Shunde, deputy director of the Intellectual Property Center of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, voices the opposite opinion, however.

"The lawsuit between Cisco and Huawei is not an isolated case. It has become an increasingly popular means of commercial competition for companies to utilize the weapon of intellectual property rights," Li told *Beijing Today*.

It's obvious that there are commercial profits hiding behind the copyright infringement accusation of Cisco, said Li, but Chinese companies should also confront with the appeal using legal weapons instead of simply blenching.

"It's not clear now whether Huawei has really violated the intellectual property of Cisco. The matter awaits the judgment of the court," Li said. "If the court rules against Huawei, they should undertake the responsibilities of possible compensation. But if it does not, then Huawei can also appeal against Cisco for its abuse of intellectual property rights."

Li said more needs to be done to promote the awareness of intellectual property protection among local enterprises, as well as in the area of development of core technologies.

"Intellectual property is like a double-sided sword. Only when we become more familiar with the use of the weapon and strengthen its protection work, can we prevent being hurt by stronger international rivals wielding the weapon."

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: LI SHI

Straits Crossed in Historic Flights



Photo by Jackey

By Ema Ma

In a promising step for cross-straits relations, China Airlines flight No. CI585 took off from Taipei, Taiwan, and landed at Shanghai Pudong International Airport last Sunday. It was the first time that a plane operated by a Taiwan-based airline has landed in the Chinese mainland.

After the plane filled with passengers, it headed back to Taipei the same day.

During the Spring Festival season, which runs from last Sunday to February 9, a total of sixteen charter flights operated by Taiwan's six airlines will fly between Taipei or Kaohsiung and Shanghai. The flights will lay over for no more than 50 minutes in Hong Kong or Macau, bringing overall travel time to less than five hours. That is far less than the trip took in the past, when passengers had to switch planes at one of those two cities.

One reason for the opening of the new air routes is pressure from the increasing numbers of people from Taiwan heading to Shanghai for work. There are an estimated 300,000 Taiwanese in the city and its peripheral areas. That number is equal to almost one percent of the island's population.

At the end of last October, 121 members of Taiwan's legislative body lobbied for the opening of direct, chartered transportation across the straits during Spring Festival. After three months of negotiations, on January 7, the Civil Aviation Administration of China approved the six airlines to operate indirect flights between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland during the holiday.

The China Airlines plane that arrived in Shanghai actually made its whole first flight devoid of passengers. "Although we had to take a loss, because the lack of ticket sales meant

we could not cover the costs of chartering the flight, we still wanted to be the first airline to get permission to service the route. One reason is to satisfy our customers' needs, and the other is that the market potential after direct transportation is instated is clear," said Dong Guoliang, sales manager at China Airlines' Beijing Representative Office.

Wang Liming, a Taiwan-born businessman who works in Shanghai and booked a ticket on the first cross-Straits flight back to Taipei told a reporter from *Beijing Youth Daily*, "I always told my daughter that I couldn't go back to see her very often because it is farther from Taipei to Shanghai than it looks on a map. Direct flights should take no more than two hours. I hope this trend continues so I can see my family more frequently."

That same Sunday, a ferry headed directly for Taipei set sail from Fuzhou, Fujian Province, in southeast China.

Search Starts for Olympic Sponsors

By Hou Mingxin

Liu Qi, secretary of the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and president of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG), has encouraged enterprises, especially domestic firms, to net the opportunities and profits to be made from the Olympic Games and establish themselves as international brand names.

Liu made his remarks at a forum aiming at promoting a national Olympic marketing program held on Monday in Beijing, in which more than 500 domestic enterprises participated.

Later at the forum, Yuan Bin, vice director of BOCOG's Market Development Sector, said that the committee has selected 19 candidate industries for Beijing Olympic sponsors. They are the banking, insurance, pharmaceuticals, automobile, clothing, express delivery, freight, retail, computer, telecommunications, Internet facilities, software, chemical products for daily use, pollution-free electrical equipment, petrochemical, tourism and hospitality, communication equipment, airline, and beer and wine industries.

However, future sponsors will not be limited to these fields.

Yuan added that because hard alcohol and tobacco products are not keeping with the healthy spirit of the Olympic Games, companies from those industries will not be considered as possible sponsors.

According to Lin Zongtang, director of BOCOG's Chinese Brands Promotion Office, the capital's hosting of the Games will bring tremendous business opportunities for local and domestic companies.

Lin appealed for domestic enterprises to adopt varied brand strategies to improve their international images. He said he would like to see 30 to 50 multinational corporations emerge in China over the next five years as a direct result of the nation being selected to host the world's biggest sports gathering.

Plan Sought for "International Media Street"

By Hou Mingxin

The Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning and the government of Xuanwu District announced the launch of a program to seek designs for the "International Media Street" at a press conference held on Monday. According to a report published in *Beijing Youth Daily* on Monday, plans from domestic and overseas interests will be welcomed.

The media street, intended to be a main base for domestic media enterprises and international media giants, will be located in Xuanwu District, running 3.2 kilometers from Xuanwumen in the north to the southern Second Ring Road.

Current plans show the street will be 70 meters wide, development on each side will extend 100 to 300 meters, and the total development area will reach 117.6 hectares.

The organizers of the design search are hoping to find a plan that will provide for the creation of outstanding service facilities to foster the growth of a large international media industry community. Designs should pave the way for the street to become a renown brand in the future, and show a fusion of modern and traditional culture, according to the *Beijing Youth Daily* report.

By Shan Jinliang

Beijing's first complete light rail line, also known as the No. 13 subway line, began operation when a train left the starting station at Dongzhimen at 10:30 am on Tuesday. Trains have been running along the west half of the line since September 28 last year.

The 40.85-kilometer light rail line runs through Xicheng, Haidian, Changping, Chaoyang and Dongcheng Districts. The east half serves the Dongzhimen, Liufang, Guangxi-men, Shaoyaoju, Wangjing West, Beiyuan and Lishuiqiao stations, while the Xizhimen, Dazhongsi, Zhichunlu, Wudaokou, Shangdi, Xi'erqi, Longze, Huilongguan and Huoying stations lie on the west half.

It took the first train 53 minutes to complete the journey from Dongzhimen to Xizhimen.

Starting the same day, 10 trains were added to the fleet of 10 already servicing the west line. All the trains are equipped with electric radiators and air conditioners for passenger comfort year-round.

According to the line's timetable, the first trains leave the end stations simultaneously at 6 am daily, while the last trains pull out at 9 pm. The interval between trains is less than 10 minutes.

For the first half of this year, the price for a ticket on the light rail is 3 yuan. Later, an automatic ticket sales and checking system will be put in place, after which charges will vary according to length of travel.

Beijing Youth Daily reported on Tuesday that the city will invite bids for the design of the second light rail line after Spring Festival. That line should officially open by the end of this year and will run from Bajiao Youleyuan (Amusement Park) Station in Shijingshan District in the west to Tongzhou Station in Tongzhou District in the east.

Xinhua Photo

Ride the Light Train, Light Train



Social Security to Hit Stock Market

By Ema Ma

Starting this year, retirees may feel more confident about the government's ability to continue their social security payments. "Up to forty percent of all social security funds will be gradually invested in the capital market to prevent their depreciation and increase their value," said Liu Yongfu, deputy minister of Ministry of Labor and Social Security, at a seminar held last week in Shanghai.

Questions remain about whether fluctuating stock prices may actually cause the funds to drop and about the impact this large flow of

investment will have on the market.

Professor Tuo Guozhu, deputy director of the Financing and Insurance Department of the Capital University of Economics and Business, is not as optimistic as most government officials. He said, "only part of the funds collected through reducing the state's stake in listed companies can be invested, which means that the amount of social security funds put into the market will be far less than that disclosed by the government."

According to Tuo, public fund trustees have limited

experience, casting doubt over their ability to reliably invest in the complicated stock market. In February 2001, public trustees bought a significant number of shares at the IPO of China National Offshore Oil Corp. (CNOOC), but only two days later the company's stock value plunged below its issuing price.

He added, "However, any attempt to help the funds appreciate is better than just depositing them in the bank."

Zhang Guoqiang, a senior analyst at the R&D Center of CITIC Securities, said that while this is good news for

the stock market, he sees two reasons why the move will not have as large an impact as the government has predicted. First, he agreed with Tuo that the actual amount invested will be far less than claimed. "Second, the plan to invest social security funds in the market has been floating around publicly for a long time, so investor anticipation is not as strong as originally hoped," he added.

According to Zhang, "special caution is needed because investing social security funds is not like other investments, as it has a direct impact on the welfare of common people."

Capital After More Foreign Money

New Beijing Mayor Meng Xue-nong said on Wednesday that the Chinese capital will further improve its investment environment to attract more foreign investment and enhance the city's economic competitive edge.

Meeting Gary L. Rogers, vice-chairman and executive officer of US-based General Electric (GE), Meng said every municipal department should improve their efficiency and performance to optimize the city's investment environment.

He said the Beijing Municipal Government is preparing for the 2008 Olympic Games by vigorously carrying out infrastructure construction.

Multinational companies are welcome to help speed up the city's development and join infrastructure construction programs for the Olympics, Meng said.

Rogers said GE's investment in Beijing has paid off. The company is planning to invest more money and expand its business in China.

(Xinhua)

Informer Protection Backed by Code

By Ema Ma

Upright citizens that wish to report information about corruption, bribery or other wrongdoing by government officials but are concerned about revenge need not worry any longer. Last Friday, the municipal procuratorate introduced new measures allowing informers to file reports under assumed names backed up with eight-digit pin-numbers to hide their true identities.

Confidential reports can be filed through direct visits, written correspondence, telephone calls (010-68299067) or e-mail (chin_2@sina.com). All informers must provide phone numbers where they can be reached for further information.

People who file reports can safely inquire about the progress and results of their case by contacting the procuratorate office using their aliases and secret codes.

"Eighty percent of the reports about illegal activity by civil servants come in from the general public," said Zhou Liqiang, head of the procuratorate's appeals department.

"Informers who file allegations that are verified through thorough investigations and lead to suspects being convicted or otherwise punished can receive money bonuses," Zhou added.

Policies to Make City Accessible to All

By Ema Ma

The Beijing Legislative Committee held a meeting last Friday to explain the legal reasons for constructing a city completely accessible to disabled people. A final regulation will be implemented before the end of this year.

"Besides the 622,000 disabled people in the city, 1.88 million elderly and 1.8 million children also need fully accessible facilities," said an unnamed spokesman of the committee.

Achieving handicapped-accessible status is also a basic requirement for the Olympic Games and Paralympics to be held in Beijing in 2008.

Although construction of handicapped-accessible facilities began in Beijing as early as 1995, most external structures such as ramps have been either damaged or rendered useless by barricades of trash or other obstacles. At the same time, internal installations such as banisters and accessible counters and phones remain scattered and inadequate.

"Basically, Beijing's handicapped-accessible systems are totally inaccessible," said the spokesman. Furthermore, there has been a complete lack of dissemination of information on services and programs for the disabled among the public.

The committee is expected to make accessibility facilities mandatory on all public buildings, beginning with their very planning. That will mean that construction projects will not receive official approval unless they satisfy basic requirements for handicapped accessibility.

"Ten handicapped-accessible buses will be put into operation on Chang'an Avenue in the near future," disclosed the spokesman.

State-owned Banks Talk Listing

By Shan Jinliang

The Agricultural Bank of China made major achievements in 2002, and expects to make its initial public share offering (IPO) at a "proper time."

Vice governor of the bank Yang Mingsheng made the comment to the press Thursday last week, adding that the Agricultural Bank is considered the worst performing of the three state-owned commercial banks.

The other two commercial banks (the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) and the China Construction Bank), along with the Bank of China, have also expressed the intention of listing on the stock market.

The day before Yang's announcement, Bank of China spokesman Wang Zhaowen revealed that the bank would seek listing on the domestic securities market before 2005. And both China Construction Bank and ICBC have said they plan to be listed within five years.

The listing plans come in light of China's WTO commitment to further open its financial markets and the large-scale entry of foreign banks in 2002.

An effective defense

Analysts say listing is an effective way for local institutions to defend themselves against foreign banks, and also a way of strengthening themselves. Listing will also help counter the problem of lack of capital among state-owned banks, enhance transparency and them become more market-oriented.

However the road to being listed may yet be a long one. "Nobody can give a specific listing date for the four state-owned banks," said Zhao Xijun, vice director of Remin University's Finance and Securities Research Institute, "as they are unable to reach the goal currently, despite their eagerness to do so."

First step yet to be taken

Zhao warned that much remained to be done by the banks

before listing on the domestic market became possible. To be eligible for listing, the banks must first become independently run shareholding companies, with the shareholder being a particular organization, and report profits for three consecutive years. He said while the government was sure to be the shareholder, the specific departments had not been identified.

Bad assets stand in the way

An ICBC vice director, who requested anonymity, told *China Economic Times* last November, "Bad assets are the biggest barrier standing in the way of listing for state-owned commercial banks." Bad loans, the sources of these bad assets, amounted to 17.6 billion yuan by the end of 2001 for the four banks and the dead debt rate was 25 percent.

General manager of China Construction Bank's assets-saving department, Yang Xiaoyang, says the bad debt rate needs to be reduced to below 10 percent in domestic stock market,

echoing the call last year by former governor of the People's Bank of China Dai Xianglong for the four state-owned commercial banks to cut their bad assets rates to under 10 percent within five years.

Most of the bad assets come from state-owned companies, many of which have made little progress in increasing profits, said Zhao, adding that the problem "can only be dealt with effectively when the systematic reform of country's state-owned companies makes a breakthrough."

Zhao also said that despite asset volumes of trillions of yuan, the banks would need at least dozens of billion yuan in capital, which might be beyond the capacity of the market. "The market needs to grow stronger," he said.

He concluded that while it was also possible for the government to take some political measures to help the banks become listed on the domestic exchange, it was not possible to help them to be listed overseas.



The first Chinese made roadster, the Meirenbao, rolled off the assembly line at Geely Group's auto production base in Taizhou, Zhejiang Province on Wednesday. The car will go on sale for 150,000 yuan from April.

Shougang in High Gear

By Ema Ma

Zhu Jimin, the newly appointed president of steel giant Shougang, released two press statements Thursday last week. One was to officially confirm that Shougang will relocate its steel plant from Shijingshan, in Beijing's western suburbs to Qian'an, in Hebei Province. The other was to announce the company is investing 500 million yuan to acquire a 15 percent stake in Beijing Hyundai Auto, which will make it the automaker's second biggest Chinese shareholder.

"Considering the need to improve environmental protection, Shougang has ceased part of its steel production since last November. Our plan is to cut our production this year at our original factory by two million tons," Zhu announced.

A new hi-tech steel plant with an annual production capacity of two million tons is under construction in Qian'an and is expected to go into operation in July 2004. Eighty percent of Shougang's domestic iron ore mining takes place at Qian'an, while newly discovered mines there will increase the self-supply rate to 30 percent.

"Furthermore, that will be a modern enterprise, completely different from the old plant in terms of technology and management," said Zhu.

The second announcement

took many commentators by surprise. "Steel plant to make cars?" Some media followed the headline with a conspicuous question mark. "We are at the cutting edge of auto parts production. For example, one of our subsidiaries possess the world's most advanced technology for manufacturing air-conditioners used in cars, and its products hold 30 percent of global market shares," Zhu maintained.

As the biggest of the state owned heavy industries in Beijing, Shougang is responsible for many "firsts" in the city's manufacturing history: It was the first to introduce the concept of human ecology in the factory environment, the first listed company to promote itself through "road shows," and is number one in terms of profit and tax turned over to the state.

Shougang first made forays into the hi-tech sector as early as 1991, establishing SGNEC, a joint venture with NEC, which designs, develops, produces and markets integrated circuitry for computers.

To many analysts, Shougang typifies the ideal of a traditional industry transforming itself into a "new," modern one. Its new strategy coincides with Beijing's blueprint for "new industry": microelectronics and autos, and it seems likely that its efforts to transform itself will be supported by the government.

Forbes Takes Over China Top 100 Rich List

By Shan Jinliang

The founder of China's Top 100 Rich List of *Forbes* magazine, Rupert Hoogewerf, left Shanghai for Great Britain last week after four years on the job. On the same day, *Forbes* China announced his dismissal to local press.

The job of maintaining the list is to be taken over by Russell Flannery, chief representative officer of *Forbes* China, according to the company. "(Hoogewerf) will be paid according to the terms of the contract that he agreed to," said Flannery in an email to *Beijing Today* Tuesday, "What my company announced last week was that we will not work continue to work with him on a contract basis."

The sudden power shift has aroused widespread attention, given that both Hoogewerf and the list have become well known in China.

The news reportedly came as no surprise to Hoogewerf. "He had known the news on the night of January 22," his former assistant Chen Bing told *Shanghai Wednesday*. Chen however, expressed surprise, as the partnership be-



Rupert Hoogewerf
Photos by Photocom

tween Hoogewerf and *Forbes* had run smoothly over the past four years.

Chen said the *Forbes* 2002 China Richlist, which Hoogewerf edited was regarded as the direct cause for Hoogewerf's dismissal. First vice president of *Forbes*, Mikhail Susov, said during the World Economic Forum last week, the work was too taken up with self-promotion, and that

caused the termination of their cooperation. But he admitted that Hoogewerf had contributed a great deal to the China Richlist.

Flannery, however, gave a different reason. He said the non-standard methods, narrow scope and inadequate materials taken by Hoogewerf had forced *Forbes* to redo the list.

According to Flannery, the *Forbes* 2003 China Richlist will be different to the previous ones, and its preparation will involve three channels: *Forbes* Shanghai Office employees will start the investigation; professional financial staff at *Forbes* headquarters in New York will serve as a reference; and researchers in China will be invited to participate.

GAB Robins Granted First Loss Adjustment License

By Shan Jinliang

GAB Robins, the world's second largest loss adjustment company, was granted China's first foreign loss adjustment license early this month, however it is not the first foreign loss adjustment company to run such a business in China.

Lily Li, chief representative officer of GAB Robins Beijing Office, told *Beijing Today* Wednesday that a few foreign loss adjustment companies have operated in China from the 1990s, including GAB Robins. GAB Robins started operations in China in 1996.

"Some foreign loss adjustment companies started operations before the China Insurance Regulatory Commission (CIRC) was established in 1998," said Li, "and the Hong Kong-based Pierre Leong was one of them."

After realizing the market potential, the CIRC began to promote the domestic loss adjustment market, and more than 20 Chinese companies were established between March 2001 and the end of 2002. However statistics from the China Insurance Association reveal only six of these made profits, with the highest being around 1 million yuan.

Both Chinese and foreign companies attribute the poor performance to the immature state of the loss Adjustment market. Dong Huichen of Beijing Dalu Loss Adjustment told *Beijing Today* the whole domestic environment, the insurance system and a general lack of acceptance were behind the weak market demand.

"The introduction of foreign companies will bring good concepts and expertise," said Dong, but it will take a long time for the market to mature to the point where insurance buyers and insurance companies accept the concept of loss adjustment.

Sohu Sees First Real Profits

By Ema Ma

Internet portal Sohu.com has announced a US \$1.9 million net profit for the fourth quarter of 2002, a sixteen-fold increase on the third quarter's nominal profit of \$112,000.

"This is the first concrete profit we have earned. Previous so called profits have only been theoretical," Sohu CEO Charles Zhang told *Beijing Morning Post* in an interview following publication of the company's last quarter financial statement last week.

A sign of changing times revealed in the financial statement is that revenue generated from short message service has surpassed traditional advertising revenue, once regarded as the major income source for portal websites.

Nasdaq China president Huang Guohua said, "Sohu's bottom line will boost investors' confidence greatly and prove Chinese web portals' sustained capacity to make money. Chinese portals are considered high quality stock by Nasdaq analysts." Zhang said it means Sohu's shareholders have begun to make money.

First Civil Air Freight

JV Established

By Yang Qing / Shan Jinliang

Air China Freight, China's first joint venture in the area of civil airfreight, is to start operations in February.

Air China vice president Zhang Xueren said last week the registered capital of the new venture will be 2.2 billion yuan. The foreign partner, Hong Kong-based CITIC Pacific, holds a 25 percent stake, Beijing's Capital Airport holds 24 percent, and the remaining 51 percent will be controlled by Air China. He said that it was possible that the company would be listed on the stock market, should the opportunity arise.

A regulation governing foreign investment in the civil air sector, passed last August, has paved the way for foreign investors to pour capital into the civil airfreight industry, media analysts say.

Foreign companies are still not permitted to hold a controlling stake when investing in the civil airfreight industry, and any single foreign investor may hold no more than 25 percent share, according to the regulation.

Sino-German Joint Car-parts Venture Operational

A car parts manufacturer jointly funded by German car producer Volkswagen AG and two leading Chinese auto makers has gone into operation in Shanghai.

With a total investment of US \$96 million, Volkswagen Automotive Gearbox (Shanghai) is designed to produce MQ200 gearboxes for Shanghai Volkswagen's Polo cars and FAW-Volkswagen Automotive's Bora models.

Volkswagen AG controls 60 percent of the new company, while China's Shanghai Automobile Industry Group and the First Automobile Works (FAW) Group each hold 20 percent.

Equipped with advanced technologies, the new company is expected to produce 180,000 gearboxes annually, rising to 300,000 by the year 2005. (Xinhua)

New Buicks to Hit

China Market

Two new Buick sedans from Shanghai General Motors, a Sino-US joint venture, will be launched on the domestic market nationwide on February 10.

Sources from the joint venture said prices for the Regal GL 2.5 and the Regal G 2.5 would be 263,800 yuan (US \$31,783) and 243,800 yuan (\$29,373).

The two models are equipped with sunroofs, leather seats, wide tires and six-cylinder engines.

Shanghai GM, the largest Sino-US joint venture, is a \$1.52 billion joint venture between General Motors and the Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation. (Xinhua)

EU Proposes Farm Subsidy Overhaul

Brussels, Belgium, January 22 (AP) - The European Union has proposed reforms of its contentious \$45 billion agricultural subsidy program, diverting money away from hand-outs based on production to payments aimed at promoting rural development and food quality.

The plan aims to end the decades-old practice of subsidizing farmers based on output, which is widely criticized for encouraging wasteful overproduction regardless of market conditions.

Instead, farmers will be given a single payment based on the size of their farm, rather than production levels. But Franz Fischler, a member of the EU Commission responsible for agriculture, said the plans "were not going to pay farmers for doing absolutely nothing."

Subsidies will also be linked to farms meeting standards of food safety, environment protection and animal welfare.

Direct payments to big farms will be scaled down gradually from 2007, with the aim of freeing up more money for rural development in the EU's poorest farming regions.

Cuts will also be made in the fixed prices which the EU guarantees for products including cereals, milk and rice.

However, the plan will face a fight to get approval from the 15 EU governments, with France almost certain to battle for a better deal for its powerful farm lobby.

(Paul Ames)

Analysts' Take:

EU's Reform Is the Result of Pressure

Qiu Yuanlun
The EU announced these reform initiatives firstly because of the World Trade Organization Doha Round where developing countries required developed ones to cut their agricultural subsidies both for production and exports, to lower their tariffs on agro-product imports, and increase quotas for the import of agro-products from developing countries.

Secondly, the EU aims to counter the US which raised a set of agro-industry and market reforming proposals which the EU saw as aggressive and impractical at the WTO last July.

Internal demand for more environment friendliness, sustainable development and food safety is forcing the EU to find new ways to promote its agricultural industry. That's why EU promised to link its subsidy to farms with the standards of

food safety, environment protection and animal welfare.

Lastly, the EU's agricultural subsidies amount to 45 billion euros each year, nearly half its \$100 billion annual budget. EU enlargement, to take place in two years, will increase the number of members from 15 to 25. Most of the new members rely heavily on their agricultural industries, so they will consume a large portion of the EU's agricultural subsidies. The EU reduced the subsidy levels prior to their entry, thus avoiding a hefty increase in subsidy expenditure, which was already too big.

(Mr Qiu Yuanlun is the former director of the Institute for European Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Mr Qiu has been focusing on study of the European Union for the past forty years and serves as a consultant in the institute.)

Impact on Trade With China Is Limited

Li Gang
The EU's subsidy reduction is, I personally believe, a gesture against the US in the WTO.

Agriculture is a strategic industry in each country. No one, including the EU, wants or dares to risk any damage to its agricultural industry. Therefore, it's unrealistic to say the EU proposals will cause significant price fluctuation in agro-products on the world market.

China exports seafood, husbandries, vegetables and fruit to the EU and imports milk, meat and seeding husbandries from it. The volumes traded are moderate. The EU's reform is mainly focused on grain production, which is not one of the items traded between China and the EU.

(Mr Li Gang is a senior researcher and director of the Institute of European Studies, Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation)

Toys Are, Them!

The Toy Fair, which celebrated its 50th anniversary and was held at ExCeL, London, between January 25 and 29, 2003, is the leading UK exhibition for the industry and one of the major toy fairs in Europe.

As a trade show, the fair is only open to the business sector. It brings together manufacturers and retailers - from small innovative companies to big chain outlets, and the latest technological innovations.

400 exhibitors from 35 countries participated and 16,500 visitors from over 60 countries visited the fair. Showing thousands of product ranges, many on display for the first time, the Toy Fair has unique importance in the toy industry worldwide.

Xinhua Photo



Chavez Gains in Strike

Caracas, Venezuela, January 28 (AP) - President Hugo Chavez's government scored a victory in Venezuela's political crisis by producing more than 1 million barrels of oil Tuesday.

But the 58-day-old strike has put Venezuela on the verge of economic collapse, caused long-term damage to the oil infrastructure and forced Chavez to extend his ban this week on US dollar purchases to preserve foreign reserves. Venezuela's currency, the bolivar, has lost 25 percent of its value this year.

Energy analysts warn Venezuela has lost production capacity during

the strike and it could take months to restore. Refining is curtailed, and Venezuela is purchasing gasoline abroad.

Opposition leaders insist the oil strike will continue and are now gathering voter signatures to demand an amendment to reduce the president's six-year term to four years.

A similar idea was floated last week by former US President Jimmy Carter, who proposed an alternative: Dropping the strike, and holding a binding referendum halfway into Chavez's term, or next August.

(Alexandra Olson)



AP Photo

Dark Foreboding at Davos

Davos, Switzerland, January 28 (BusinessWeek Online) -Three years ago, when equity markets were surging and the high-tech boom was nearing its peak, the attire of choice for attendees at the annual World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, was casual winter garb. Corporate executives, academics, even heads of government left their jackets and ties at home and wandered around the Congress Center in this exclusive Swiss resort sporting open-neck shirts or baggy sweaters. "It was the New Economy look," recalls Daniel Yergin, chairman of Cambridge Energy Research Associates.

Not any more. Dark suits and crisp white collars were back with a vengeance at this year's confab. Three years of stock market turmoil, economic gloom, and corporate scandal have clearly put the creme de la creme of the international economy in a somber mood. Everyone wants to look responsible and serious again. "The economy is in a terrible mess, and it appears as if we're heading for a war," says an Italian banker. "It wouldn't be right to look as if we are on a jamboree." Indeed, the unspoken dress code at Davos is underscoring the theme of this year's event: "Restoring Trust."

Talk of war even permeated the Saturday night gala - the traditional social highlight of the annual six-day gathering. In previous years, the 2,000 or so delegates were invited by WEF founder and President Klaus Schwab to a lavish reception at which black tie was de rigueur. This year, it was light refreshments before a performance by the UBS Verbier Festival Youth Orchestra. Tuxedos? Not this year. Dark suits again sufficed, in keeping with the new spirit of sobriety.

It's not just the dress that's different this year. Past WEF meetings were rarely dominated by a single theme. But this year, all minds were focused on Iraq. The prospect of war and its likely impact on the world economy surfaced at most of the sessions, and it hung over the social events. Instead of going skiing on Sunday morning, when delegates are traditionally free to follow their own pursuits, they crammed into the main Congress Hall to hear US Secretary of State Colin Powell defend the White House's policy toward Iraq.

The tensions between the US, Europe, and the muslim world were sometimes palpable. One US delegate left a session entitled "Modernity vs. Traditions: A Challenge for the Muslim World" astonished by the antipathy that surfaced in the discussions. "It's as if we come from different planets," he said. "We just don't view the world in the same way." Time and again, European business leaders attacked President George W. Bush's Middle East policy. US policymakers were clearly shocked. Such vitriol has rarely been evident at Davos.

(David Fairlamb)



Xinhua / Reuters Photo

Oil Prices Fluctuating Between Hope and Despair

Singapore, January 29 (Reuters) - World oil prices bounced back up earlier this week after Iraq said it would retaliate against crude producing neighbor Kuwait if the United States launched an attack from Kuwaiti territory, but dipped Thursday on renewed hopes of averting a war in Iraq as the US launched one last diplomatic push. US light crude futures were down 23 cents at \$33.40 a barrel.

(Mike Segar and Jonathan Landreth)

SEC Sues KPMG for Securities Fraud

New York, January 29 (AP) - The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) sued KPMG LLP Wednesday, saying the accounting company fraudulently let Xerox Corporation manipulate its accounting practices to fill a \$3 billion gap so that it appeared to be meeting expectations.

SEC has filed the lawsuit to the US District Court in Manhattan.

KPMG defended by calling SEC's accusations unfounded and "driven, we believe, by today's charged regulatory environment."

(Larry Neumeister)

AOL TW Lost Nearly \$100 Billion

New York, January 30 (Reuters) - AOL Time Warner Inc. on Wednesday posted a 2002 net loss of nearly \$100 billion -- the largest annual loss in U.S. corporate history -- and in a sign of further turmoil, media mogul Ted Turner said he would step down as vice chairman.

The New York-based company, already reeling from the recent departure of Chairman Steve Case, CNN head Walter Isaacson and federal probes into accounting practices at its online unit.

The company posted a full-year 2002 net loss of \$98.7 billion, about the same as the GDP of Egypt and double that of New Zealand.

(Reshma Kapadia)

800 Euro Counterfeit Cases in 2002

Hague, Netherlands, January 27 (europol.eu.int) - In 2002, Europol received more than 800 euro counterfeit cases throughout its 15 member countries.

Approximately 500 perpetrators responsible for the manufacturing or distribution of counterfeit euros were arrested during the year.

In addition, the European Central Bank reported that 167,118 counterfeit euro banknotes were removed from circulation during 2002. This does not include counterfeit notes seized by police.

The most popular bank note to be counterfeited is the 50 euro note, Europol said.

Philip Morris Changes Name to Altria

New York, January 27 (AP) - Philip Morris Companies Inc., the New York tobacco and food company, changed its name this week to Altria Group Inc., a move critics said was aimed at downplaying its tobacco interests.

But Philip Morris will still be used for Altria's tobacco companies, Philip Morris International Inc. and Philip Morris USA Inc. Its food group will continue to be called Kraft Foods Inc.

Shares will also continue to be listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the old symbol, MO. The new online website has been named www.altria.com.



Xinhua / AFP Photo

"Anti-Davos" World Social Forum in Brazil

Porto Alegre, Brazil, January 29 (AP) - As thousands of anti-globalization activists displayed bright red banners espousing socialism, the six-day World Social Forum closed Wednesday here.

Over 100,000 activists are estimated to have attended the forum, which is an annual protest against the World Economic Forum held simultaneously at a luxury ski resort in Davos, Switzerland. In between protests, participants held extensive talks on alternatives to the excesses of global capitalism.

The forum is now in its third year, but the appearance of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva - Brazil's first elected leftist leader - is a revolutionary step because government officials were previously excluded. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, facing protests at home, got an enthusiastic welcome after arriving at the forum last Sunday.

Forum organizers said the 2004 event would be held in New Delhi, India. The forum will return to Porto Alegre in 2005.

(Alan Clendenning)

Analysts' Take:

Venezuela: Serious Troubles

Jia Anping
The situation in Venezuela may not be as serious as reported by the media worldwide, even though there is a shortage in the supply of petroleum and food.

The left-wing Chavez government wanted to reform the country's economic structure which would affect the benefits of the opposition coalition, which consists of the opposition parties, the federation of industrial and commercial entrepreneurs, religious bodies and the workers union controlled by the opposition.

It is believed that the US was the main support for the failed military coup last April. But the US wants a stable oil supply from its backyard now when it is heading towards a possible war against Iraq. Sixty percent of Ven-

ezuela's 3.1 million bpd oil exports go to the US.

The opposition coalition doesn't want to give up.

The government is using all possible means to stabilize oil production and exports, including leasing foreign ships and recruiting new workers.

Chaves declares his government has won the military battles launched by the opposition, referring to the military chaos last year, and is now struggling for victories in the economic battles. It seems the turmoil in Venezuela will last for several more months at least before any compromise can be reached.

(Mr Jia Anping is a Xinhua News Agency reporter stationed in Caracas, Venezuela. Mr Jia has long been a specialist in Venezuela's affairs)



Rare Ray Enjoys Day of Play

A baby eagle ray took its first glides into a new world when it left its small personal tank in the Beijing Aquarium and interacted with some fish and other animals on January 20. The 11-day-old ray must spend most of its time alone for its own safety.

The baby is the first eagle ray ever born through natural means in captivity in China. His father comes from Hainan Province, while his mother is from the Caribbean.

Photo by Cheng Yuyang

Disabled Student Sues Subway

By Sun Ming

The trial of a lawsuit filed by a disabled college student against the Beijing Subway Transportation Company started in the Beijing Dongcheng People's Court on Thursday of last week.

Zhang Cuiping, 22, said she filed the suit against the company for failure to ensure her safety, which led to the loss of her right leg. She is demanding 600,000 yuan in compensation.

A junior at Fujian Agricultural University, Zhang went to catch a train at the Beijing Railway Station subway stop on February 4 last year. She was planning to go to Sihui Station and then transfer to a long distance bus to her hometown, Tianjin.

Zhang asked the ticket checker at the station how to get to Sihui Station, but received no answer.

"I asked her twice, but she didn't pay attention to me at all," Zhang told *Beijing Today*. Zhang then went down to the platform and checked a map hanging on the wall on the side of the tunnel across one of the tracks. She said,

"I wanted to get closer to the map, but then I suddenly fell off the platform."

A train arriving at the station at just that time ran over Zhang's right leg, severing it at the knee.

"They shouldn't have hung the map on the wall of the tunnel," she argued.

The Beijing Subway Transportation Company has repeatedly said that Zhang's tragedy was completely accidental. Yellow lines are painted on the ground of every subway platform to alert passengers not to get too close to the edge. "We have done enough to ensure passengers' safety," said Wu Wang, the lawyer representing the company.

Since September last year, all maps in subway stations in Beijing have been moved to the middle of each platform. "The change has nothing to do with the accident. We just wanted to make the system more convenient for passengers," Zhang Shaokang, an employee in the company's administration office, told *Beijing Today*.

Taking It on the Chin

By Deng Ting / Ivy Zhang

Sun Yixiong, 51, has been bothered by his jaw for more than 10 years since undergoing plastic surgery in 1989.

He said doctors at the Sino-Japan Friendship Hospital have operated on his jaw 35 times, resulting in his fall from a promising employee at an international company to a member of a hotel's cleaning staff.

In December last year, Sun filed a lawsuit against the hospital at the Chaoyang District People's Court, demanding 600,000 yuan in compensation. He is currently awaiting the results of the medical accident review commissioned by the court.

Sun told the *Beijing Times* that he had hated his flat nose and short jaw since he was a child, and felt his face had a negative impact on his career development.

Therefore, he decided to take action. On January 4, 1989, Sun approached Zhang Sunyun, a plastic surgeon at the Sino-Japan Friendship Hospital.

"Dr. Zhang told me that the best way to change my nose and jaw was to get plastic surgery," said Sun.

One week later, Sun was wheeled into the operation room. His nose was stuffed with solid silica gel while his jaw was broadened with injections of liquid silica gel. After he healed from the operation, he was very happy with his new upturned nose and stronger jaw.

Half a year later, though, Sun's joy ended, as his jaw was partly swollen and itched constantly. In April 1990, Sun went under the knife again. This time, Zhang sug-

gested that the silica gel be taken out because Sun showed signs of allergy.

Sun said he underwent reparative surgery at the hand of Dr. Zhang 35 times from 1993 to 2001. Adding insult to injury, he lost his job in 1993 and later his wife divorced him.

Zhang said the liquid silica gel and the material used during the surgeries to repair Sun's face were well accepted among medical circles at the time, because liquid silica gel was considered easy to absorb. Plus, because it is injected, it negates the need for intrusive surgery.

"But this method has a serious shortcoming," added Zhang, "it is very hard to remove if it proves inappropriate for a patient. If it has been in for a long time, the liquid can spread in all directions in a body, making incisions necessary to take it out. That's why I did so many operations on Sun."

Zhang admits Sun's treatment was a failure, but blames the tragedy on Sun's stubbornness.

"When he came to get the silica gel out for the first time, I told him he would need two removal surgeries within half a year. But two years passed before he came in the second time," Zhang said. As a result, the silica gel spread, making subsequent operations more difficult.

Zhang said Sun was determined to go through plastic surgery. After the liquid silica gel was taken out, Sun asked the hospital to try new methods to change the shape of his jaw, even after being read a list of possible side effects. Moreover, according to Zhang, all of Sun's 35 surgeries were done for free, except for the first.

Big Bird Ready to Save Lives

By Su Wei

As of Tuesday, China's first air ambulance is ready to carry out rescue missions from Beijing International Airport. The plane is capable of transporting

patients within China and throughout the Asia-Pacific area.

The jet is a custom-made Deer Jet Hawker 800 XP plane, made at the request of International SOS. It is capa-

ble of flying without stopping for around 3,800 kilometers at a speed of 830 kilometers per hour. The jet has been equipped with a special track for loading patients and a complete set of medical instruments, including a respirator and electro-cardio monitor.

One doctor and two nurses from International SOS will be on hand to care for patients any time the plane is used.

He Jingbin, deputy general manger of International SOS, said the price for air rescues is "very high. But our members can enjoy the service free of charge."

Individuals who buy international medical and assistance insurance from New China Life Insurance also receive coverage for medivas via the plane for charges up to 1 million yuan.



Dr. Charles Van Reenen, area medical director of the China Region for International SOS, inspects the new medivac jet. Photo by Cheng Tieliang

Filial Robbery

By Su Wei / Hu Rong

A report released by the Haidian Branch of the Beijing Public Security Bureau last week revealed that in the fall of last year, a young man conspired to steal 570,000 yuan from his sister and her husband.

On October 24 last year, Han Mei (pseudonym) arrived at her home in Haidian District to find her younger brother, Han Zhenqi, 26, lying in the yard with blood on his face. She checked the house and discovered that 570,000 yuan in a leather case that had been stashed under her bed was missing. The money belonged to her husband, Yu Kaixiong, a trading company manager who had taken the money from his office and was going to deposit it into the company's bank account.

The police found no direct evidence of a struggle in the bedroom, though a brick with blood on it was found in the yard. None of the neighbors questioned by the police said they heard anything unusual that morning.

Han Zhenqi had been living with his sister since being released from prison in 2000 after serving a six-year sentence for robbery. He was alone in the house the morning of the robbery. He had a small wound on his forehead, which accounted for the blood on his face. When interrogated by police, Han's story was inconsistent except for repeated descriptions of the alleged burglar as a "man in his 40s." Three days after the crime, he confessed to having schemed to steal the money after finding the case under the bed

when chasing his dog.

After discovering the cash, Han called Wang Bin, a friend from prison, and told him to head over to the house. When Wang arrived, Han steered him directly to the money and told him to run away with the case. "I promised him 200,000 yuan. Then we messed up the room to look like there had been a burglary," Han admitted.

Han also talked Wang into hitting him with the brick until he bled to give him an alibi.

After over one month on the run, Wang was caught by police in Anxin County, Hebei Province. He had already spent 140,000 yuan from the total score.

Han and Wang are being held in detention in the Haidian Branch of the Public Security Bureau. They are both likely to return to prison for the crime.

Skin Show in the Snow



Photo by Ma Duosi

By Chen Ying

Despite an outside temperature of -2 degrees centigrade and grade six gales, Wu Jing, a middle-aged woman from Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, stood in the snow smiling, wearing nothing more than an oversized bikini for over 40 minutes on Sunday morning.

Wu bared her flesh to the elements for the inauguration of the First Ultimate Anti-cold Games held at the Snow World Ski Park in Changping District. The games will last from February 1 to 10. Participants are restricted to people in proper health with winter swimming experience.

Entrants will be split by gender. The two winners from each day's contests will go on to the finals, to be held February 15. The first prize awards will be 5,000 yuan, with 3,000 yuan going to the runners-up and 1,000 yuan to the third place finishers.

At this point, however, Wu and Zhang Yong from Jiangxi Province, dubbed the "snow queen and prince" by the park, look hard to beat.

Even after her incredible defiance of the elements, Wu was not finished and strapped on skis for a few runs down the mountain in her skimpy attire. "Although this is the first time for me to participate in games like this, I'm confident I'll stand up to all the challengers in the end," she said.

On-Line Scalper Nabbed

By Su Wei / Liu Jianfeng

A sales manager of a foreign company and first time on-line scalper of train tickets has learned that crime does not pay.

The man was arrested on January 25 by police from the Beijing Railway Public Security Department on charges of trying to privately sell a large volume of tickets.

That evening, the police received dozens of reports regarding messages claiming train tickets for sale on the portal website www.sina.com.cn. All the messages were left by one person, surnamed Wang, who was charging around 100 yuan more than the standard price for each ticket.

Police investigators logged onto the site and discovered all the tickets were for sleeper berths on temporary trains servicing the busy lines from Beijing to Nanjing, Shanghai, Baotou and Harbin between January 25 to 31. Every message related to the tickets listed the same mobile phone number and address for booking.

Following that address brought the police to a room on the eleventh floor of Changxin Mansion near Anzhen Bridge in Chaoyang District at around 10:30 pm. There they found a man in his late 20s sitting alone in front of a computer, writing emails related to train tickets for sale.

The man, whose full name has not been released by the police, confessed to having booked over 60 train tickets on the routes 10 days before, under the auspices of buying tickets for his colleagues.

"I wanted to sell them until two days ago to make sure I could earn a profit," he told the police. "People won't care about how much they have to pay for tickets if regular channels are sold out and they really want to go home."

When arrested, the suspect had already sold seven of the illegal tickets. He is now being held in detention.

Grandma Ruffled by Graffiti Prank

By Chen Ying / Hou Liang

A migrant worker is paying the price for pulling a prank that caused an old woman to have a relapse of hypertension last Thursday.

Mrs. Sun, whose full name was not revealed and who is in her 70s, lives in Dongmianhua Hutong, Dongcheng District. She went out for a walk that morning to discover the Chinese character "拆" (*chai*, which means to demolish) written in chalk on several places along the wall at the south end of her yard. Looking around, Sun found more than ten of the symbols on other walls along the alley.

In Beijing, the *chai* symbol is a common sight, as it is drawn on buildings or areas targeted for demolition and reconstruction.

Sun was nervous and confused about why she had not heard about any plans to knock down her alley.

She decided to investigate, and spent that whole day going from one government administration to another. To her relief, everywhere she went, she was told there were no plans to take down the hutong.

Dizzy by this point, Sun returned home at 4 pm. She checked her blood pressure to find it was very high.

She was angry, however, and despite some feelings of discomfort, decided to take action against whoever had drawn the prank symbols. Her first move was to contact the Jiadaokou Civil Management Office and tell them the whole story. Staff from the office arrived at the scene shortly after the call.

When they got to Dongmianhua Hutong, they happened to see a young man in the middle of carefully writing something on a wall. It was clear that the half-formed character was that for *chai*.

Under questioning, the young man confessed that his name was Li Yi, he was from Henan Province and he was temporarily living near Jiadaokou. He had been drawing the characters along walls in nearby alleys for amusement.

As punishment for the prank, Li has to clean all the walls he marred and pay a fine of 300 yuan.

Police Crash Wedding Ceremony

‘Cruel? Do you know how cruel he was to me? If you don’t arrest him at once, I will sue you.’

— Xu Xiaodan

‘If the crime had been more serious — like a murder — then I don’t think it would have been wrong, but a simple robbery (with a fake gun) doesn’t warrant such extreme action.’

— Corrie Dosh

‘Even though there is some conflict between emotion and law, the law should always be more important. I even think that we can ignore the factor of emotion entirely.’

— Sun Yi

By Sun Ming

Police in Shenyang, Liaoning Province arrested a suspect in a robbery case at his wedding on December 28 last year. The case aroused controversy over whether the police had acted correctly in nabbing the suspect just as he was getting married.

Qian Wei (pseudonym) was suspected of having broken into a young woman’s apartment and robbing her of 1,500 yuan cash and a Nokia cell phone on December 14.

In the morning of that day, Qian knocked on the door of Xu Xiaodan (pseudonym). Qian claimed he was a plumber and that he wanted to check whether Xu’s steam heaters were working properly. After Xu opened the door, Qian pretended to check the steam heater in each room.

“He did so in order to make sure Xu was the only person at home,” Zhang Zhiyong, deputy director of the Beidaokou Police Station, told *Beijing Today*. Qian then tied Xu to a chair with a rope and forced her with a pistol to tell him where she had put her money. The pistol was found to be a fake following Qian’s arrest.

Xu’s sister reported the incident to Beidaokou Police Station later that day. Xu told police that she was also harassed sexually by the robber. “But she denied that she was raped,” said Zhang.

According to Xu’s description, police tracked over 10 suspects in the following two weeks. They got a clue from Xu that the culprit would be getting married on December 28.

Xu and five policemen went

to Xinying Hotel where the wedding ceremony was being held that day. Xu immediately recognized the groom was the man who had robbed her. Police arrested Qian in front of 80 of his relatives and friends at the ceremony. Qian’s mother passed out.

Qian confessed his crime to the police. “I didn’t have enough money for my wedding ceremony,” he said.

According to police, the bride left Shenyang the same day. “We haven’t contacted her up to now,” said Zhang.

The case was reported by local newspapers in Shenyang and was soon picked up by newspapers in other cities. Were the police right to arrest a suspect at his wedding? Was the action humane? The topic became a controversial issue. Opinions follow:

Corrie Dosh, an American journalist in Beijing

I think the police were wrong to crash the man’s wedding and arrest him. If they knew he was getting married, they probably knew where he was previously. I think the witness should have identified the man at the police station. If the crime had been more serious — like a murder — then I don’t think it would have been wrong, but a simple robbery (with a fake gun) doesn’t warrant such extreme action.

Eric Easton, law professor from University of Baltimore Law School, US

The police had a duty to arrest the criminal as quickly and safely as possible. If arresting him at the wedding was their

first, safest opportunity, I believe they did the right thing. However upsetting the arrest might have been for the bride and the families, their feelings do not take priority over the community’s security. For the bride’s sake, one would also hope that the police arrested the suspect before the ceremony had been concluded.

As a lawyer, though, I am concerned about the eye-witness identification. Such identifications are notoriously unreliable, and the circumstances surrounding this case should raise serious questions.

I would be especially concerned that the witness was prepared to identify the groom whether he was the robber or not. He was presumably the only suspect at the wedding. The police doubtless told her why she had been brought there, and she would have been eager to put the case to rest. She may not have had a good look at the suspect, but made the identification nevertheless.

It would have been far better for the police to have arrested the man, brought him to the police station, and had the witness pick him out from a “lineup” of several men. Such evidence would be much more reliable and ensure that the right man was convicted.

Sun Yi, lawyer from Beijing Tongdian Law Firm

There are no regulations for when the police should take this kind of action. Police can decide by themselves. Even though there is some conflict between emotion and law, the law should always be more important. I even

think that we can ignore the factor of emotion entirely. Police should catch felons as soon as possible.

Zhong Yuan, a professor of journalism at Huazhong Economics and Technology University

To arrest a groom at his wedding ceremony sounds like a scene in a movie. I think the police’s action was legal. But whether it was fair and reasonable depends on how serious the crime was. If the criminal committed a serious crime, police should capture him as soon as possible, no matter what he was doing. This is also fair to the bride, because it would stop her from marrying a felon. If he just committed a minor crime, I think police should wait. In this case, the suspect used a pistol, but it was proved to be a fake. He robbed Xu, but only took 1,500 yuan. He harassed the victim sexually, but he didn’t rape her.

Zhao Song, a lawyer from Beijing Beidou Law Firm

Before police took action at the wedding ceremony, they could have taken the suspect to the police station and asked the victim to identify him. If police can’t find enough evidence, they can release suspects within 24 hours. They didn’t need to arrest the suspect at the wedding ceremony.

Shen Jie, China Engineering Import & Export Company

I don’t think the police did anything wrong. They were doing their duty. Maybe the bride even knew that her husband would commit robbery to fund the wedding.

Beijing Today interviewed Zhang Zhiyong, deputy director of Beidaokou Police Station

To be frank, I’m very angry about all this controversy. People criticized us a lot. They only stress that we arrested a man at his wedding ceremony, but they don’t know how hard it was for us to investigate the case and how hard it was to find the suspect. I think that people should view criminals as rats crossing the street.

The robber was very cunning and had not left anything, such as fingerprints or hair from which we could identify him. We had no physical evidence, so the only way was to ask the victim to identify the suspect. We can’t take suspects to our police station if we haven’t enough evidence.

So we had to ask the victim to track the suspects together with us. The victim was adamant she could identify the thief straight away. Before we took action on December 28, we had tracked over 10 suspects. Sometimes the victim didn’t go with us because she was busy.

The victim reported that the thief would be getting married on December 28. The suspect was a vender in a market for agriculture products. The victim’s father is a rich businessman who wholesales products to the market. The suspect knew the victim’s father.

So we took her to the wedding ceremony that day and she recognized him at once.

We planned to capture the suspect after the wedding. We told her that it might be cruel to the bride in front of so many friends and relatives. ‘Cruel? Do you know how cruel he was to me? If you don’t arrest him at once, I will sue you.’ So we had to arrest him at the wedding ceremony. We captured him when he was going to a room to change clothes.

Also, we worried that the suspect might shoot at our police. The victim said he had a pistol. Yes, the pistol was a fake, but we only found this out later.

SOUND BITES

“Taking folic acid before and during early pregnancy to prevent some serious birth defects in their babies should not increase a woman’s chances of having a twin pregnancy.”

— Dr. Jose Cordero, director of the CDC’s National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities regarding the latest results from a study involving almost a quarter of a million women in China, conducted by scientists from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the United States and the Beijing University of China.

“The majority of the council thinks we should continue with the weapons inspections. This is what they think today, and I think it is important to say so.”

— Jean-Marc de la Sabliere, France’s U.N. ambassador. Despite US President George W Bush’s hawkish State of the Union speech, no member of the UN Security Council changed its position on Wednesday, with most hoping war can be averted or delayed by allowing weapons inspectors more time to do their work in Iraq.

“We just wanted to have a little fun, especially when it’s so cold in the winter. And I think that this country could use a little bit of lightness and fun right now. We’ve had a pretty tough year and a half in this country.”

— Bill Allen, National Geographic’s editor in chief. The venerable yellow-bordered magazine, long a repository of gorgeous family-friendly photography, is publishing its first swimsuit issue (featuring an almost naked girl wearing three well-placed shells).

By Chen Ying

Eating Babies in the Name of Art

British television shows eating of baby in art program

Between law and morality?

Channel 4, one of the more progressive British television stations, gave its viewers quite a shock on January 2 when it broadcast a program in which a Chinese performance artist ate a baby.

Described by executives of Channel 4 as a “thought-provoking film about extreme art in China,” the documentary, called “Beijing Swings,” featured a man named Zhu Yu who displayed photographs in which he was washing a stillborn child in a sink. He then ate the child. Insisting he could not “find any law which prevents us from eating people,” Zhu Yu said, “I took advantage of the space between morality and the law and based my work on it.”

Earlier, the station also showed German anatomist Professor Gunther Von Hagens conducting the first public autopsy to be carried out in Britain since the 1830s in front of a live audience on November 21, 2002.

These sensational programs provoked instant controversy and debate.

Emails to Channel 4

Channel 4 had expected a lot of comment on its actions and it duly published some of the messages it had received regarding these programs on its website.

The following are some of them.

David Perkins

I have just seen the channel 4 program ‘Beijing Swings’ and I feel compelled to write to you to share my opinions. For your information I am an Oxford-educated man, thirty-four years old with postgraduate studies in media theory who feels strongly about the right to expression, freedom from censorship, etc. I sincerely wish you to know that I am deeply disturbed and puzzled about why you wanted to take things so far in the direction taken in this program. At this moment I feel sickened and deeply sad. I’m not yet sure I feel angry - but I’m sure this will come.

I think Channel 4 was irresponsible in showing material associated with some of the works from this group of notorious artists. I know that I could have switched off and that the evening news shows items far more shocking and potentially traumatic for some viewers, but for example, the cannibalism item could have been described and not shown (as it was - obviously up to a point). It was a serious omission that there was no helpline offered after the program for those who might have been affected - you surely knew from talking to psychologists (Which I hope you did consult - please let me know) that there would have been a good chance of this.

Paul Woodruff

Where are the boundaries of common decency? Clearly not in the minds of either the perpetrator or you as the purveyors. How you can possibly even consider showing such stuff is surely beyond the comprehension of all reasonable and right thinking people. Did you consider the feelings of people who have experienced the profound sense of loss when they lost a child prematurely or had their child still-born? I doubt it, and if you did then you are even lower down the scale than the so-called artist is.

Steve Misiura

I can understand why programs like this can be upsetting to people, but then you don’t have to watch them do you? There are plenty of other things on TV and the program was on quite late. I have to admit I couldn’t watch all the scenes but that doesn’t necessarily mean that it shouldn’t be shown. It was a fascinating and riveting program and let’s face it, arts programs can be kind of dull. It was good to see a subject like this handled intelligently and not over-hyped. I think that it’s great that there are challenging and provoking programs like this being made. Stuff like this is obviously happening in the world and people like me want to know about that. I want to be challenged and I want to have my horizons broad-

ened, without judgment or prejudice. Just because a program documents a certain lifestyle or belief doesn’t necessarily mean that the program makers endorse it. And just because a subject is unpleasant or shocking or immoral or whatever doesn’t mean that it should be swept away.

Scott Christie

This was a real bolt from the blue. Right the way through it was an amazing engrossing piece of work. It fused the pseudo-documentary and some wacky art-house technique to great effect. There have been few films that have both had me wanting to turn off due to the incredibly hard (but brave) subject matter and also made me want to watch more as you never knew how it was going to end! If someone was to ask me for an extreme cinema title, this would be it! Thank you for showing something that will stretch the minds of those watching. This is a rare program indeed, and one which raises many issues.

Opinions from China

Huang Baolian, reporter, 21st Century World Herald

Does eating babies tackle people’s fear of death? Does grappling with death like this represent a new direction in culture? What originality and inspiration is there in this?

Edited by Chen Ying

By Su Wei

Li Guizhi is not too impressed by the occupation her 24-year-old son, Wang Liang, has chosen for himself. Wang, a graduate of Beijing Normal University with a major in computer science, has decided to play the market rather than getting a job. "He's got some nerve. Nobody would agree that dabbling in stocks and shares is a good choice for a university graduate. The reason you study is to get a good and stable job, isn't it? Otherwise why should we save money to pay for his studies?"

The son counters that the reason for his choice is the same as the reason why he chose to study computer science at university. "I have a variety of interests and abilities, and making money from stocks and shares is one that I want to develop," claims Wang. "I know my weak point is that I am not a sociable per-

Graduates Spurn Conventional Careers

son. By doing this I avoid that problem."

Wang agrees that getting some safe job would be an "open road", but a road that is too restrictive. "The road would be too crowded with all the other people who have chosen it."

Wang is one of over 510,000 students in China who decided not to look for jobs following their graduation in 2002. That's 20 percent of the total number of graduates gaining bachelor degrees last year. Ten years ago, only two percent of graduates did not immediately start jobs.

Not a matter of inability

Beijing Daily reported recently that nearly half of these graduates aim to start their own businesses.

"It is not that we cannot find a job. The point is that we do not want to be passively involved in a company. We want to actively participate in it," says Zhu Jun, who started his own business designing computer programs with his classmates last summer upon their graduation from Tsinghua University.

"It would be much better to be the boss of a company than an employee in a foreign company, though it may involve more obligation and greater risk of bankruptcy," he says. "For me, starting a company brings me the sense of being successful and is a kind of self-challenge."

Ge Fei, Zhu's girlfriend, who majored in foreign trade at the Capital University of Economics and Business, opened a western-style cafe last June in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. She recalls that during her internship in a trading company, she noticed that western and Chinese people liked visiting bars either for a chat or to discuss business.

Another reason for starting her bar is the freedom it gives her. "I don't like being told what to do. I like the feeling of running the business myself and making my own decisions."

After getting a bank loan, she rented a store in Xijiekou, Nanjing, decorated it in a western style and employed a few local university graduates as staff. The monthly profit for her bar has now reached around 10,000 yuan.

She says that starting a business is particularly difficult for a woman. "Almost everyone tried to persuade me to give up the idea of running a business by myself. They felt that even a male graduate would probably fail in going straight from being a student to a manager or a job creator."

Studying for better prospects

Graduates interviewed by *Beijing Today* from inland China, especially provinces with less developed economies, or those with less popular majors such as mining or tunnel and bridge construction

share the idea that they are unwilling to go back to their hometowns. They would prefer to stay in large cities with developed economies such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

Sun Ping (pseudonym) from Hubei, who majored in biochemistry at Beijing University, has just taken the national exam to qualify for masters study. She failed the first time she took the exam last year and suspects she didn't do too well this time either. But even if she fails again, she'll try a third time next year. "I would have no difficulty finding a job as a technician in Hubei with my existing qualifications. But the monthly salary for a newly graduated student is no more than 700 yuan. I think I'm worth more," she says.

Sun points out that the competition for graduates with bachelor degrees in the employment market is fierce. "I am from Hubei. Since most of the enterprises in big cities prefer local residents I am at a disadvantage," she says. "The more qualified you are, the better your chances of finding a job. There's no use wasting time to find some basic job now. Why not spend time on studying to improve my prospects?"

Li Zhong, a student in the masters degree program of the legal faculty at Renmin University agrees. He mentions a company which had refused him on the grounds that he was not from Beijing. But when he told them he was studying for a masters degree they changed their minds and said he could practice for them at the same time as continuing his studies. "This shows I made the right decision - studying further makes it easier to get a good job."

Wang Ji, 26, who graduated two years ago with a major in mechanical engineering from Beijing Science and Technology University is trying to get a visa to study in Australia. When *Beijing Today* asked him why he wasn't trying to find a job before leaving, he explained it would be a waste of time and energy. "If you get a job it can be hard to quit," says Wang.

He says that students in his position suffer more family pressure. "I am already an adult but I still live on the money that my parents earn. Most of my classmates are able to return some money to their parents as well as making a living themselves."

Sun Ping agrees, saying that her mother once complained to her about how their relatives were gossiping that she wanted to continue studying because she had failed to find a job. "If I fail a third time, I will have no choice but to go back to my hometown because I will lose my resident's permit and benefits in Beijing," says she. "One of my friends was in the same position. Because of the pressure from her family she went back to Hubei to work in a factory."

We need entrepreneurs

Xiong Fei, vice head of the Business Start-up and Management College of Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics says that this trend of university students either turning to higher education or starting their own companies rather than going straight into jobs is vital in the development of a market economy. The aim of university education, he said, is not just to enable people to get jobs. "It should also help in developing entrepreneurs and job creators."

He compared it to the wave of layoffs in state-owned enterprises which was once considered unacceptable by society but is now regarded as an inevitable by-product of market reforms. "University graduates used to have little choice. They just got a job after graduating. These days they have more options."

Xiong said starting a business was an effective way to solve the problem of graduate employment. "Many other students would be attracted to join a new business run by their friends. By creating wealth for themselves they are also creating employment opportunities for others."

Xiong attributes this new trend to new policies issued last year allowing students to keep their residence permits for two years after graduation and making it easier for them to find jobs in other provinces.

"In any case, it's very hard for graduates to find good jobs." He says this year the total amount of university graduates will surpass two million, 670,000 more than last year, and an increase of 46 percent.

Photo / Tony Stone

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From T-Rex to Tweety Pie

By Ivy Zhang

A set of four-winged and feathered dinosaur fossils unearthed in western Liaoning Province has shaken up the world of Paleontology, offering a new insight into how the ancestors of birds first learned to fly.

The fossils indicate the dinosaur, which has been named Microraptor

Gui, had one pair of wings on its forelimbs and another on its hind legs, enabling it to glide from tree to tree.

"This represents an intermediate stage before the active, flapping flight stage," according to the cover story published in the latest issue of *Nature* journal last Thursday.

Microraptor Gui was a small predator living about 110-120 million years ago. It is about 77 cm in length, including a long tail.

The discovery by Chinese scientists could help settle the century long debate surrounding two different hypotheses: one holds that flight evolved in ground-living animals via a powered running stage; the other says flight evolved in tree-dwelling creatures through an intermediate gliding stage, a theory which has been given added credibility by this new discovery.

"The find sheds light on this stage of evolution of flight which we still know little about," said Dr. Xu Xing from the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology (IVPP), Chinese Academy of Sciences. Xu, the team leader in Liaoning, and his team have just completed their paper after more than six months study.

Western Liaoning, a fossil gold mine

The paper is based on six specimens of Microraptor Gui, all of

which were unearthed in Chaoyang county, western Liaoning between 2001 and 2002.

"Western Liaoning is a very interesting place for paleontology research," said Xu who started his research on dinosaurs in 1992.

It is a hilly and dry region dotted with small hills, valleys and villages. Two big rivers run across the land. Fossils found here usually date back to 110 to 130 million years ago, and they indicate there used to be high mountains, lakes and forests in the area with a damp and hot climate.

The Japanese were the first to discover fossils in western Liaoning in the 1940s. They discovered fossils of ancient reptiles and fish.

In 1993, fossils of Confuciusornis, the ancient toothless bird next only to the Archaeopteryx in age, were found here. While the Archaeopteryx has teeth, the Confuciusornis was the first bird to grow a beak, 125 million years ago.

"The finding is a great advance because feathers and flight ability are two major characteristics of birds," said Xu.

"It is universally accepted that birds evolved from dinosaurs and some people speculate that some dinosaurs had feathers, but no fossil evidence had previously been found to support this theory. On the contrary, many fossils show that dinosaurs had scales, like reptiles. Thus, scientists want both to ensure the dinosaur had feathers and work out how it got them."

When the first fossil of Microraptor Gui was found in 2001, it indicated the dinosaur had feathers all over its body, but the feather prints were too vague to be sure.

Fly up or fly down?

There is little doubt that dinosaurs evolved into birds in the Jurassic Period.

But the question is: did the dinosaur fly up from the ground by flapping its wings or fly down from trees by gliding?

The "ground up" theory used to be dominant in scientific circles. Xu said he himself used to believe this version.

Last week, Ken Dial of the biological flight laboratory at the University of Montana, US, showed some baby birds flap their wings to help climb steep slopes. His findings suggest ancestors of birds learned how to fly by running and flapping their wings at the same time.

"Logically, it makes sense," said Xu. "The study of dinosaur's behavior indicates that dinosaurs were typical creatures living and running on the ground. Well-developed models and data can describe the process of dinosaurs beginning to fly when running fast."

"But Dial's speculation is risky," Xu continued. "We are speculating on ancient behavior in a modern way. Many factors might have been involved that we don't know about. This theory is possible from the biomechanical perspective, but may not represent the real evolution."

The "fly-down" theory has its own strengths.

Nearly all the creatures related with gliding or flight live in the trees, for instance bats. They were likely to depend on gravity as their muscles were less-developed during the transition from non-flight to flight.

Xu and his colleagues' paper provide new evidence in this regard.

"We suggest that the ancestors of birds first learned to glide by taking advantage of gravity before flapping flight was acquired in birds," the paper concludes.

A landmark find?

After the paper was released, Xu received about 100 emails within a week including requests from global media organizations.

It has been hailed as a landmark, even by scientists who doubt the "gliding down" theory.

But some scientists have proposed that the fossils might be explained in other ways.

According to *Reuters*, Paul Sereno, a University of Chicago paleontologist, said fossils of other dinosaurs with feathered legs would have to be found before Microraptor Gui could be confirmed as representing an intermediate stage in bird evolution.

"Whether this represents an intermediate form that all birds passed through is a question that's going to be hotly debated," Sereno added.

But Xu feels confident that other similar fossils will be found.

"We are continuing our research. I can say not only Microraptor Gui, but other kinds of dinosaurs also have four wings. This is not a unique case," he said.



Reconstruction of the Microraptor Gui by Portia Sloan

Frozen Corpses Fall From Plane

By Sun Ming

Two Turks plummeted to the ground from an Air France flight as it prepared to land at Shanghai Pudong International Airport on Thursday last week, said Phoenix Satellite Television on Tuesday.

One fell through the roof of a house, startling the 82-year-old grandmother who was cooking at the time. The other fell onto a small orange bush nearby.

Police found the two men had fallen from the undercarriage of the Boeing 777 flight. Signs of frostbite were visible on the bodies of the two men, indicating they had frozen to death during the flight from Paris, said Shanghai police.

The two men were 20-year-old Oguz Yaman and 19-year-old Kara Coban. Oguz was a plane fanatic who had many plane models at home.

"The two stowaways left for Italy one week before they died. They entered Italy illegally and then went to France. Oguz called his parents from France to mail money to him."

The flight took off from Charles de Gaulle International Airport on Wednesday and landed at Pudong airport at 11:05 am on Thursday.

Just minding my own business...

Xu Ronghua, a farmer, was working in his back yard in Shengang Village in the Shanghai suburbs at 10:55 am on Thursday last week when a frozen corpse crashed through his roof.

"I heard a loud noise," said Xu. A few seconds later, there was another loud bang. "I was startled," he said.

82-year-old Ding Xiulin was cooking when one of the bodies fell through the kitchen roof and landed on the firewood pile beside her.

"I don't know when my mother-in-law will recover," said Xu Ronghua, whose house and orange tree were damaged. "She doesn't want to speak and keeps trembling."

Xu lit firecrackers after the police had removed the corpses. "I want to

exorcize the feeling of terror from the house."

Hiding in the undercarriage

Two staff members from the French Embassy in Shanghai came to the scene at about 4 pm. "It seemed that police were waiting for them to identify the corpses. They checked the uniforms the two men wore," said 21st World Herald.

Both corpses were wearing red coats which appeared to be airport uniforms. One was holding something that looked like a walkie-talkie.

At 7 pm, Shanghai Pudong International Airport claimed the two men had fallen from the undercarriage on flight AF112 from Paris to Shanghai, because police found the two men's footprints inside the undercarriage berth.

There have been several cases in recent years of people trying to enter another country by stowing away on airplanes, so the airport thought that the two men might be stowaways. However, the motives of the two Turks are still unclear.

Dead already

Airline experts said the two men must have died during the 10-and-a-half hour journey from France, not as a result of their fall.

"The possibility of surviving in the undercarriage, which is as large as two rooms, is very small," said Fan Ru, a pilot for China Eastern Airlines.

Passenger airplanes usually fly at between 10,000 and 12,000 meters. The temperature descends to 6 degrees Celsius by the time the airplane has reached 1,000 meters and falls to 30 to 40 degrees below zero at higher altitudes. "So it's quite normal for people who hide in the undercarriage to be frozen to death," said Fan.

"A lack of oxygen and low air pressure could also have killed the men, even if they survived the cold temperatures," said Zhao Chu, a military expert from Shanghai Huantai Strategy Center.



The fossil of Microraptor Gui

Q & A on Four-winged Dinosaur

By Ivy Zhang

With the publishing of the scientific paper named *Four-winged Dinosaurs From China* last week, the ancient creature and its leading researcher Dr. Xu Xing of the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, have entered the global spotlight.

Beijing Today interviewed Xu on his spectacular find this Tuesday. Excerpts are below:

Beijing Today: Why did you name it the Microraptor Gui?

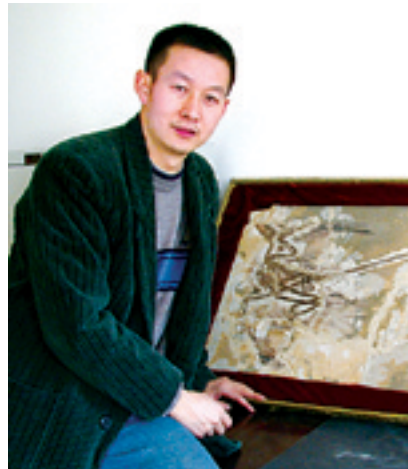
Xu: The scientist who finds a fossil and writes an article about it can name it anything he wants. I proposed the name in honor of Gu Zhiwei, a distinguished Chinese paleontologist who contributed greatly to the study of Jehol biota.

Beijing Today: How do you know the dinosaur had four wings?

Xu: It is hard to make that conclusion. Actually we found the first fossil of Microraptor Gui in 2001 but we waited until six more specimens were collected before we were certain. We wanted to ensure the accuracy of our observation.

Some do have doubts about our find. An American scientist said he plans to form an international team to come over to look at the fossils.

But most scientists believe us. In terms of the morphology and distribution of feathers on the dinosaur's fore-



Xu Xing

Photo by Liu Liping

limbs and hind legs, they are the same as birds' wings.

Beijing Today: What did the Microraptor Gui eat and do in the trees?

Xu: It probably ate insects or small lizards. Most of time, it stayed in the trees or glided from tree to tree.

It had a strong gliding capability because its forelimbs and breastbones were well developed and it was good at controlling its body. We speculate that it made adjustment during gliding, flapping its wings slightly to help.

Beijing Today: Some say if the dinosaur had wings and feathers, it should be called a bird instead of a dinosaur. What do you think?

Xu: Birds are descendants of dino-

sosaurs, that is for sure. The definition of dinosaur covers birds. But our new find makes it more difficult to separate dinosaurs from birds.

It is nearly impossible to distinguish them using only a few features because it was a transitional process from non-flight to flight.

Beijing Today: It is said that William Beebe, by observing chicks, proposed in 1915 that flight evolved through a gliding, four-winged stage. Is that true?

Xu: It was Beebe who proposed that concept but it was based on false observations.

He claimed the newly born chicks had big feathers on their thighs, so he speculated that the earliest birds might have had four wings.

In fact, it was not a wing at all. No developmental evidence is available to prove this theory. The four wings he referred to are quite different from what we have detected.

Beijing Today: How many kinds of dinosaurs are there in the world? What about in China?

Xu: There are 300 to 400 kinds of dinosaur recognized around the world. In China, dinosaurs have been found across the nation. Sichuan, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia and Liaoning have proved particularly fertile in terms of variety and quantity of dinosaur fossils.



One corpse fell through a roof six kilometers from downtown Shanghai.

Photo by newsphoto

By Zhao Pu

They used to be a source of boredom and pain, but now lanterns are a valuable part of Zhang Shuangzhi's life. As a boy, any mistakes he made in helping with the famous Zhang family lanterns were punished with a beating by his exacting father. It was only later in life when he realized that the art of making handcrafted lanterns was dying out that Zhang decided to light the family flame again.

Now Zhang has a wide reputation as the last specialist lantern maker in Beijing. The 60-year-old folk artist was invited to numerous temple fairs to exhibit his lanterns for the Spring Festival and fans of this ancient craft will be able to see them at Beijing Art and Craft Factory's folk arts exhibition from February 1-3 and Dongyue Temple after that.

Just a job

"Making lanterns is a kind of entertainment for me now but it used to be my father's livelihood to feed the whole family," says Zhang.

Lanterns have always been an important part of Spring Festival customs, as much so as firecrackers. The Lantern Festival on the 15th day of the first lunar month marks the end of the Chinese new year celebrations. According to tradition, families hang red lanterns outside their doors on Lantern Festival night, and there are lantern fairs all over the country.

Zhang's family lantern trade was started by his father, Zhang Changshun. "My grandfather and father were both tilers," he says. "They worked in constructing officials' and eunuchs' houses around the city."

But during wintertime it was too cold for construction projects to continue so Zhang's father had to find a part-time job to feed the family. Having learned to make lanterns at the age of 15 he decided to organize his family in producing the colorful lamps and selling them for the Spring Festival.

"Everyone in the family was responsible for a certain part of the lantern making procedure. My father was the designer and supervisor of course." Zhang's father made the structure of the lantern, while his mother pasted paper or silk onto it. "My father would send me, my elder brother and three younger sisters to buy paper and other materials from the stores nearby."

The family business was a success, and their creations were always the best-selling lanterns at the Dongsu and Di'anmen bazaars during Spring Festival. "People liked my father's lanterns for their good quality and delicate structure," says Zhang. "They called him 'Xiao Deng Zhang' (Lantern Zhang)."

"To tell the truth, I didn't really like lanterns as a little kid. I was often beaten by my father when I made a mistake in making them or if I wasted



Keeping the Flame



Zhang's granddaughter helps him with the paper-cut part.



Painting is a basic skill in the process of lantern making.



Zhang demonstrates lantern art at the Beijing Art and Crafts Factory folk art exhibition.

Photos by Zhuang Jian

any materials," Zhang reveals. "It was just that I grew up surrounded by lanterns so it became natural for me to acquire the skills to make them and become my father's successor."

Re-igniting the flame

After 1949, Zhang's father worked in a state-owned armaments factory. Making and selling lanterns in wintertime faded out of the family's life. "Lantern Zhang" became a memory for many people.

"My father still made lanterns, but just for fun and new year gifts for friends and relatives," says Zhang. Zhang himself enrolled in school and left behind those colorful lanterns which caused him so much trouble.

Zhang didn't finish middle school as his family couldn't support five children at school at the same time. He started to work at the age of 16. After two years hard labor as a porter, Zhang was introduced to a model factory owned by a waterpower bureau. His job was to make models of waterpower stations at the factory.

One of the designers in the factory was a member of the China Folk Art Association, which was founded by the government in 1975 to help preserve Chinese folk art. His family had a history of making kites. When the designer discovered Zhang's father was the well-known "Lantern Zhang", he invited Zhang to enroll in the association as the second-generation successor of the famous lantern maker.

Zhang agreed, and soon after joining the association he realized his family lanterns were more than a livelihood. He felt they were part of China's cultural legacy. He decided to become the new "Lantern Zhang".

Zhang says the members in the association are all like firemen. "We put out the fire

which burns the nation's legacy, and save folk arts from becoming lost and extinct." Their task is to preserve and develop their own arts, and at the same time discover other folk artists and invite them to join the association.

In the last few years, Zhang has introduced several paper-cut artists from Shanxi Province and a kite maker to the association.

In 1999, CCTV offered to make a program about Zhang's lantern art. But instead of presenting his own story, Zhang advised them to focus on a dying lantern factory in Beijing. "That was the only lantern factory in the city and the program helped to save it," Zhang declares proudly.

Unlike kites and other folk arts, lantern makers are a rare breed. There are only three traditional lantern makers still alive in Beijing. Zhang is the youngest and the only one still able to make good quality lanterns. The two others are too old to work, and they have no successors to their arts.

Lantern fans

There are four titles on his card now: Member of China Folk Art Association, Beijing Toy Association, Beijing Cultural Property Association, and folk artist. Zhang's schedule is tight as many organizations invite him to display his lantern art, especially when the Chinese new year approaches.

He has brought lanterns to numerous temple fairs, hotel cultural displays and even branches of McDonalds. Zhang wishes to remind people of lantern culture as a significant part of Spring Festival customs. "I'll grab every chance I get to show off my beautiful lanterns!" he says.

Most of these activities are not profitable. People's interest and enthusiasm for folk arts are the main rewards for Zhang.

In 2001, Zhang was invited to appear with a few other folk artists at the Ganjiakou Store in Haidian. The local newspaper gave the wrong time for the display so when folk art fans turned up to the store, the exhibition had already finished. Many disappointed people found the store's manager and complained to him.

To appease the folk art devotees, the store invited Zhang and the other artists back for an encore. "The display was extended from two days to a whole week due to the local interest," Zhang smiles.

Zhang often tours around the country to promote Chinese folk art. During a trip to a small county in Sichuan last year, he was pleasantly surprised by the fervor of the locals. "People from nearby villages crammed into the small exhibition hall. The lanterns I brought with me were sold out in a few hours. And there were still enthusiastic buyers asking me for more lanterns. Some people stood there for half a day watching me making lanterns."

On the balcony at Zhang's home there hang dozens of newly made lanterns. "I get orders from people who have seen my displays," says Zhang. There are also some bulk purchase offers, but Zhang never accepts them. "My lanterns are all handmade. Each of them is time-consuming. I will never curtail the time and energy it takes to make a lantern for profit."

Zhang's elder son and daughter in law are now potential successors to his lantern art. "They are both interested in it, especially my daughter in law. She is a kindergarten teacher and teaches little kids to make handicrafts." Zhang's granddaughter is also a budding folk artist. "She loves to help me with the paper-cut part when she comes to visit me on weekends," Zhang laughs.

Classic Performer in a Classic Costume

By Iris Miao / Guo Jia

There is a saying in Chinese theatrical circles that no opera family will last more than five generations, however the Tan School, which has long occupied a central position in the history of Peking Opera, now boasts a sixth generation performer. No wonder opera aficionados say that one page of the Tan Family history represents half a volume in the history of Peking Opera.

The Tan School, established by the legendary Tan Xipei, stands as testament to the opera singer's supreme artistic accomplishments. Tan, who set the benchmark for *Sheng* roles (see sidebar *Peking Opera Categories*), influenced all the major schools, as well as artists like Mei Lanfang, Yang Xiaolou, and Yu Shuyan. Some of the operas he compiled and staged in the late 19th century are considered classics today, such as *Si Lang Tan Mu* (*Yang Yanhui Visits His Mother*), *Ding Jun Shan*, and *Lian Huan Tao* (*The Bandit's Stronghold*).

On Monday night, the great grandson of Tan Xipei, 76-year-old Tan Yuanshou, donned a magnificent costume first worn by his illustrious ancestor 150 years ago, to perform the classic opera *Dao Yu Ma* (*Stealing the Emperor's Horse*). The robe's dragon design, still dazzling in its colors despite its age, perfectly complemented the performance of the elderly, yet vigorous Tan Yuanshou,

On Monday night, renowned Peking Opera artist Tan Yuanshou, patriarch of the Tan School, and great grandson of the school's founder, Tan Xipei, provided the climax to a four-night series of opera classics. His appearance on stage was dramatically set off by his magnificent dragon design robe, bestowed on his great grandfather, Tan Xipei, by Empress Dowager Cixi of the Qing Dynasty.

giving this night of the Spring Festival opera season an air of something truly special.

Tan Lizeng, Tan Yuanshou's son, later told the audience, "The dragon design costume was bestowed upon my great great grandfather, Tan Xipei, by Empress Dowager Cixi." Cixi, an ardent devotee of Peking Opera, presented the costume to Tan Xipei when he performed the opera for her. She also made him a fourth rank official of the royal court.

Though its intended use was as an opera costume, says Tan Lizeng, the robe is by no means an ordinary one, bearing designs and motifs only a prince or someone of royal blood was entitled to wear. Both the tailoring

and the design are of exceptional quality.

Meticulously cared for over the years, on the rare occasions the robe is worn for a performance, it has its own wardrobe attendant entrusted with the responsibility of looking after it.

"My father hardly ever wears it, only ever when he is performing *Dao Yu Ma*," says Tan Lizeng. "My great great grandfather used to often performed this piece with his favorite disciple Yang Xiaolou for the royal court."

With half an hour to go before he was due on stage, Tan Yuanshou repeatedly urged his make-up and wardrobe artists to hurry. He performed leg stretches, and called the *erhu* player in to accompany him for part of an aria to warm up.

According to Tan Lizeng, his father is very strict with himself, never letting a day pass without practicing. He is also scrupulously careful with his dress and makeup, always checking in the mirror before making his entrance, to be sure his appearance is precisely as it should be.

Stubbornly maintaining the lifestyle of a true artist, Tan Yuanshou refuses to give up the habits some of his contemporaries have long since discarded. He lights a cigarette every now and again, to ease the tension during the long process of being made up. "Father still smokes, drinks and eats spicy food," says his son, "we children don't want to control him."

At 8:40, after a few more warm-ups backstage, Tan Yuanshou took the stage, to thunderous applause, and all the performers backstage ran to the wings to get a glimpse of the master in action.

The following night, the most frequently performed and the most controversial Tan School opera of the century, *Yang Yanhui Visiting His Mother* opened with a crash of gongs and drums, with Tan Yuanshou's two favorite disciples, son Tan Xiaozeng and grandson Tan Zhengyan leading the cast for the last of this series of Tan School operas.



Tan Yuanshou, wearing the 150-year-old robe, prepares to take the stage.



Photos by Cui Jun

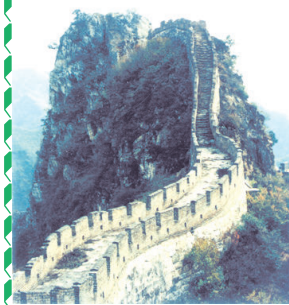
Peking Opera Categories

There are four main categories of roles in Peking Opera, all traditionally performed by males. They are the *Sheng* (Man); *Dan* (Woman); *Jing* (Man with colorful make-up); and *Chou* (Clown). *Tan Xipei* is regarded as the foremost exponent of the *Laosheng* (Older Man) role, just as *Mei Lanfang* is considered the greatest ever *Qingyi* (Young Woman).

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Sun Yue, circa 1995 (left) and 2002 (right)



Anita Mui, circa 1990 (left) and 2002 (right)



Mavis Fan, circa 1996 (left) and 2001 (right)



Mando Madonnas

By Lu Shiwei

Popularity is fleeting, and mass popularity even more so. Pop stars that want to stay on top never adhere themselves too strongly to one music style, one look, one hairdo, even one partner. Constant adaptation is one of the skills that has kept such stars as Madonna and Japanese pop queen Ayumi Hamasaki, 23, consistently fresh and ahead of the competition.

Among stars with chameleon-like abilities in Asia, the crown must go to Anita Mui, a Hong Kong pop singer who has managed to stay in the top ranks of the scene for twenty years.

Two decades ago, Mui made her splash by winning the First Hong Kong New Singer Contest, fueled by a "girl-next-door" look and the song *Season of the Wind*. Not one to rest on her laurels, Mui sustained her success by consistently appearing in an ever-changing, unpredictable series of looks, ranging from a traditional Chinese beauty to an Egyptian goddess, a Brazilian samba dancer to a desperate widow, and recently more masculine style.

With all these changes in appearance, Mui has also adjusted her sound, often in keeping with the image she was purveying at any given time.

The secret to Mui's success seems not to have been lost on current Hong Kong pop goddess Faye Wang. Her many image tinkering have included adjustments of her name. She was born Wang Fei, changed her name to Wang Jingwen when she first went to Hong Kong to pursue a singing career, and ended up with the moniker Faye Wang, which she has ridden into mega-stardom.

Wang is now undoubtedly one of the most popular and influential female singers in the Chinese music world, with a fan base that extends to Japan and Southeast Asia. During her career, she has been criticized for

copying Tori Amos, then the Cranberries and then the Cocteau Twins. But Faye is no mere impersonator — she is set on constantly surprising her fans and the world with new looks and song styles, made possible by her keen sense of fashion and her strong personality.

Even in the emerging pop market of the Chinese mainland, staying on top requires a great deal of careful maneuvering. One star who has managed to pull that off well is Na Ying, who first won popularity when the pop scene was just emerging here as the best imitator of Su Rui, a hugely popular rock singer from Taiwan Province. Later, when a more "northwest" sound became the vogue, Na adjusted her style and earned a reputation for an iron voice as she belted out songs in the loud, bold and unrestrained style characteristic of China's hinterlands.

Years have since gone by, and Na Ying is still Na Ying, but she has changed yet again

— gone is the young girl with the blasting voice. Left in her place is a more mature metropolitan woman. It's a move that has proven savvy, as Na is still among the top female singers in the Chinese mainland.

Those that fail to change learn hard lessons, and fast. In 1994, Chen Liqiang released *I Love You More Than the World* and Mavis Fan showed up with *Rain*, both riding innocent, dreamy looks to quick fame.

Chen quickly lost popularity and has entered the "where are they now" files. Fan, on the other hand, has switched from a fairy-like image to one a bit older and darker and her music has become more mature and varied, enabling her to keep a solid place in the pop god pantheon.

Sometimes, more drastic image adjustments are needed to stay up in the pop game. Sun Yue won over the hearts of millions with the song *May You Be Peaceful* and her wide smile and plain looks.

In the past couple years, she has abandoned her clean-cut image, showing up on stage and screen in flamboyant Korean-style outfits and wild punk hairdos, dancing fiercely about and singing over fuzzy disco music. Her transformation has worked, as she has remained popular by targeting and hitting a different niche of the pop market. What she has in store for fans in the future is anybody's guess.



Faye Wang (above) in two of her many looks

Boost for Cunning Linguists

By Dong Nan

Despite its high price, an innovative new bilingual dictionary has proven to be a market success. According to the Xidan Book Building, over 500 copies of the 99-yuan *The Contemporary Chinese Dictionary (Chinese-English edition)* were sold by January 29, only two weeks after its initial release.

The English part of the dictionary is a translation of *The Contemporary Chinese Dictionary*, an authoritative Chinese dictionary published by the Commercial Press. Unlike traditional Chinese-English dictionaries,

this new dictionary gives detailed explanations of words in English, along with some examples and a full Chinese explanation. These features make the dictionary an unprecedented language resource.

"This dictionary offers users a bilingual environment," said Li Pengyi, president of the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. "When readers look up the meaning of a Chinese word in the dictionary, they will also see its English explanation, and thereby improve their English as they study."

According to the Press, it took

over 40 experts three years to compile the dictionary. Li said these painstaking efforts mean the dictionary promises to be a reliable and useful reference book.

Ling Yuan, English editor of the dictionary, expects the work to prove very helpful for professional translators as well. "From my 30 years of experience in translating, I decided that a useful bilingual dictionary should put more emphasis on giving long, detailed explanation than just giving short, direct translations. I was able to realize that idea in the compilation of this work," said the first-time lexicographer.

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One Table and More Chairs

By Wang Chunzhu
One metal table and a fluctuating number of chairs glittered under the spotlight at the experimental theatre of the Beijing Modern Dance Theatre, where the two-night run of *One Table and N Chairs* ended last Friday.

One table with a chair on either side comprises the standard set for a traditional Chinese opera. The production by the Beijing Modern Dance Theatre used this reference to classical Chinese folk arts as a modern reinterpretation to great effect.

Selections from eight traditional operas, including Peking Opera, Shaanxi Opera, Shaoxing Opera and Guangdong Opera, were used as the basis for the nine-scene modern dance, which presented nine independent stories, dealing with such disparate themes as re-encounters, marriage, farewell, and revenge.

Although much of the content was rooted in classical traditions, the form was utterly modern. The dancers dressed almost entirely in leather, and the slap of leather soles on the stage echoed the rhythm of the folk



music accompaniment.

The groundbreaking production *One Table and N Chairs* reflects the ambitions of choreographers Cao Chengyuan, Li Hanzhong and members of the

ensemble. "The status of some famous selections of traditional operas in China is like that of classical ballet in Europe," Cao says, "they've become symbols of culture that cannot be changed.

But *One Table and N Chairs* breaks the mould and provides the audience with an opportunity to see those famous pieces from a new perspective."

Photo by Lao Xiang



Photo by Qian Bingge

Old Songs are the Best Songs

By Wang Chunzhu

Pop star Fei Xiang, also known as Kris Philips, gave a solo concert of his greatest hits of the 1980s and 90s last Friday night at the Workers' Gymnasium.

Fei, whose mother is Chinese and father is American, became a household name in China after appearing on nationwide TV for CCTV's 1987 Spring Festival Special.

In 1989, he performed 63 solo concerts in 12 cities around the country, selling out every show and setting a record that remains unbroken today.

Now in his 40s, the evergreen pop singer also included hits from his two latest albums, *Loved You* and *Wild Flower*.

As the closing notes of the last song, *Clouds of the Hometown* faded, the audience broke into a rousing applause, calling out for still more. Fei obliged with an encore, another old favorite, *Annoying Autumn Wind*. As he remarked to the adoring crowd, "I don't know why, but the magic of the old songs brings back the best memories."

The Old Torn Newspaper Trick

By Wang Chunzhu

With a big showbiz smile, magician Brett Daniels flew into town last Friday. The Las Vegas star will appear on this year's CCTV Spring Festival Special, as well as conjure up eight performances for magic fans at the Workers' Gymnasium from February 2 to 7.

Daniels gave the local press a sample of what to expect at a news conference shortly after his arrival. He held up a sheet of Friday's *Beijing Youth Daily*, declaring it was the only newspaper on hand, and tore it into shreds. Then with a flick of his wrist, the shreds of paper were miraculously transformed back into a complete and intact *Beijing Youth Daily*.



Photo by Cui Jun

The performer seemed to be prepared for, even expecting, the question about what differentiated him from that other American magician, David Copperfield, who toured China late last year. "First of all, he is old but I'm quite young," he answered, smiling, "and his

specialty is conjuring something big, but mine focuses on a variety of magic skills."

As to what exactly he had planned for the Spring Festival Special, Daniels remained circumspect, explaining that CCTV had specially asked him to give nothing away.

Birthday Party for Hit Music Show

By Jenny Wang

A party was held Monday night at the Workers' Gymnasium to celebrate the third anniversary of CCTV 3's hit program, *The Same Song*.

Pop singers Chyi Chin, Kelly Chen, and Emil Chau made appearances, as did former host of the program,

Ya Ning, along with rising star Gu Haibin.

"I really want to show my gratitude to all the audience who have supported this program for three years," said director Meng Xin, "we'll make great changes to *The Same Song* in the new year, and I hope people

will still like it."

The concert was recorded and will be broadcast on CCTV 3 this Saturday. Since it first went to air in 1999, *The Same Song* has become one of the most popular TV programs in China. Monday's concert gave the audience a rare treat, with a succession of superstars singing one hit after another.

WORLDWIDE



English actor Jude Law

Jude Law Is Film Fans' Pick for Next 007

English actor Jude Law topped a poll of film fans Monday to find the next incarnation of suave secret agent James Bond.

The 30-year-old star took more than a quarter of votes in the *Total Film* magazine survey, finishing just ahead of Scottish *Star Wars* actor Ewan McGregor.

Total Film editor Matt Mueller felt Law had that "posh" edge over the competition.

"I think Jude Law has that upper class, debonair sophistication about him that people associate with James Bond," he said. "More so than Ewan McGregor and Christian Bale who came close." (Reuters)



Anthony LaPaglia and Sigourney Weaver in *The Guys*

Weaver Promotes New Film *The Guys*

Academy Award nominee Sigourney Weaver and her husband, director Jim Simpson, went to Albany, New York on Monday to promote their new film about firefighters who died in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

The Guys tells the true story of a Brooklyn fire captain (Anthony LaPaglia) who enlisted the help of a reporter (Weaver) to write eulogies for men he lost in the attack on the World Trade Center.

"It shows a little bit of light that came out of that catastrophe," Simpson said, before showing a trailer of the film at a news conference attended by state senators and local firefighters. (AP)

Music Stores Band Together for Online Market

Major US music retailers on Monday launched a service to deliver music via the Internet, a step they hope will save them from piracy that has raged on even after

the demise of the Napster online song-swapping service.

The partnership, which comes as the music industry also battles growing pressure from discounters like Wal-Mart, consists of Best Buy, Hastings Entertainment, Tower Records, Trans World Entertainment, Virgin Entertainment Group and Wherehouse Entertainment.

The six retailers said in a statement that their venture will enable them to "effectively compete in the digital music market place." (Reuters)



Singer Norah Jones

Norah Jones Low-Key After Nominations

Norah Jones' debut album picked up eight Grammy nominations and sold more than 6 million copies around the world, but it's not thanks to self-promotion or publicity-seeking by the 23-year-old singer.

In an age of pop divas, Jones avoids flashy videos, doesn't pose for pinup photos, prefers quiet neighborhood restaurants to celebrity hotspots and travels without an entourage.

"The record industry has gotten so into image that image becomes more important than the singer," she told *The Los Angeles Times*. "I don't know if there are any less good singers than ever, but most don't use their voices in ways that feel honest. Everyone just seems to go for the fast buck." (AP)

60 Minutes Creator to Step Down in 2004

Legendary producer Don Hewitt, who created the first television newsmagazine, *60 Minutes*, and has run it since the stopwatch began ticking in 1968, announced Monday he will give up the reins next year.

Hewitt, 80, nonetheless signed a new 10-year deal with CBS to continue as an adviser and to create new projects.

Jeff Fager, executive producer of *60 Minutes II* and a Hewitt protege, will replace Hewitt at the conclusion of the next television season in June 2004. (AP)



60 Minutes creator and executive producer Don Hewitt

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Pleasurable Paper Cuts

By Saliuda

In the hands of the right people, an ordinary pair of scissors and a single sheet of paper are all that is needed to create a dazzling work of art. Those people are traditional Chinese paper cutters, whose art is far more complex and difficult than it might sound.

An excellent place to see and get an understanding of this art is a Chinese paper-cutting exhibition hall that lies behind a red door on Shoushuihe Hutong south of the Xidan shopping area.

The owner of the hall and creator of the works within, Liu Ren, is a Beijing native, so it is not surprising that many of the pieces on display have a distinctly urban feel. Some show scenes from daily life in the capital, such as old women dancing, men playing chess in the street and an old man strolling through a park carrying his pet birds.

Other works represent symbols from the Chinese zodiac or auspicious characters such as *fu* (福) and *shou* (寿). However, Liu does not restrict herself to tradition - some of the pieces she is most proud of have a more modern edge. One work, (see photo at left) priced

at \$1,000, depicts a girl deep in thought surrounded by lotus flowers and fish. According to its introduction, this image is supposed to represent longing for an absent love.

Liu seems fully aware of the artistic value of her works, as many come well framed with accompanying extracts from Chinese poems that explain the meaning of the pieces. She also has imprinted images of her works on commemorative stamps, envelopes, cards, toys, T-shirts and lamps.

Where: No.16, Shoushuihe Hutong, Xidan Xinquwenhuajie, Xicheng District **Open:** Friday-Sunday 9:30 am - 5 pm **Tel:** 6601 1946



A cutting of old ladies doing the yangge, 100 yuan

Keeping the Faith

Spring Festival is a time for looking back not only on the past year, but on traditions of many years past as well. Temple fairs and other activities can provide rare chances to glimpse and even purchase the works of the dying breed of traditional folk artists that have kept many old crafts alive.

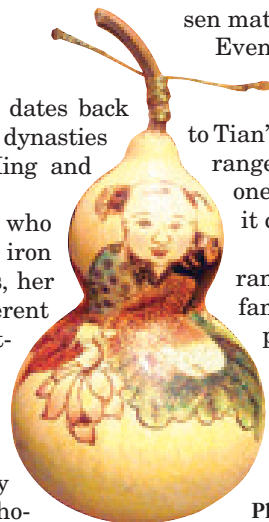


Photo by Chen Shuyi

sen material.

Even such delicate things as eggshells can become canvases for vivid creations thanks to Tian's deft touch. Among her wide range of materials, cardboard is one of the most challenging, as it catches fire so easily.

Tian's works cover a wide range of themes, from copies of famous Chinese and Western paintings to fables and folk tales, historical stories, human figures, mountain and water landscapes, flowers and birds and fish.

The palates of most iron paintings are restricted to black and hues of gray. These works tend to lose their color over the years, but well-made pieces can stay sharp for decades.

Another appealing aspect of these paintings is the price - 20 yuan to 300 yuan is enough to get a dramatic work on a piece of eggshell, cardboard or more conventional material that makes a surprising and fun gift or room decoration. Like many folk artists, Tian operates out of her home. Anyone interested in viewing her works can call her and arrange a visit.

Where: No. 91, Dongsu Wutiao, Dongcheng District **Tel:** 6406 2244

Don't Pass on This Grass

By Huang Lisha

Even in the left hands of experienced elevator operators, knitting a sweater is no easy task.

It is, however, a piece of cake compared to the folk craft of grass weaving.

Zhang Bangshou and his brothers are so skilled with grass that, unlike most folk artists who are only able to peddle their works during temple fairs or special exhibition, they have opened several stores in major hotels and shopping centers around the capital.

Zhang uses *youzhu*, a grass from southern China prized for its flexibility. With this natural material, he crafts vivid mini-sculptures, mostly of animals such as turtles and butterflies. Iron wires make up the core of each piece, allowing them to be moved into different positions. He is especially proud of his dragons, the largest of which measures nearly one meter long and sells for 800 yuan.

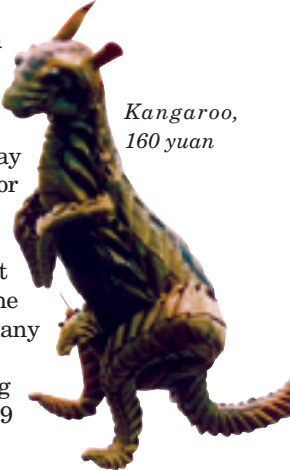
Another large lizard is a half-meter-high dinosaur (200 yuan), which looks like it stepped right out of *Jurassic Park*. While some people may not go for the all-green color scheme of his pieces, Zhang says, "I deliberately keep the grass' original color and don't use dyes. That guarantees the woven works will last for many years."

Where: Third floor, Beijing Friendship Store **Open:** 9 am- 9 pm **Tel:** 13641 090131



Grass goat, 160 yuan

Photos by Cui Hao



Kangaroo, 160 yuan

Sweet Reliefs

By Huang Lisha

An art form that originated in the ancient courts of imperial China, *bodiao*, or silk reliefs, has received a second lease on life.

That new life has come from modern artists upholding the tradition - artists like Lin Xiuzhen. This bodiao master said, "Like *gongbi*hua (a traditional realistic painting style with fine brushwork and high detail), bodiao has a strong three-dimensional effect. Cutting, folding, dying, and pasting are the four important steps in making a bodiao piece, and each step is very complicated."

Bo, the general name for silk, is the main material for bodiao because it is perfect for creating a sense of depth. These pieces are created by crafting and gluing silk pieces to a background in a painstaking process to form realistic images. To make her favorite piece, *Guo Se Tian Xiang*, an over-one-meter-long picture of peonies priced at 8,000 yuan, Lin worked for over three months.

In *Hyacinth* (1,000 yuan), another of Lin's masterpieces, the artist glued over 200 tiny purple silk petals together one by one, creating a lifelike, delicate work.

Beijing Opera fans are sure to take interest in Lin's various depictions of *lianpu*, or facial make-up designs from opera characters, which go for 200 yuan each.

Where: No. 304, Building Jia17, Hepingli Qiku, Dongcheng District **Tel:** 6429 0715 (Lin's home. Call for an appointment.)



Persimmons, 900 yuan

Photo by Peng Jianwei

Some traditional forms of Chinese folk art:

1. Zong ren (bristle figures)

These figures are made of clay with circles of bristle embedded in their bases. The finished dolls are then placed in the middle of a copper plate. When the edge of the plate is tapped, the figures revolve to the rhythm.

2. Shadow puppets

The puppets used in shadow plays are made of translucent leather, carved with thin lines to show facial features, clothes and other characteristics and then dyed

in bright colors. They are normally articulated in several places so their movements can be controlled by thin attached rods. They are not only fun to play with, they make beautiful decorations for the home.

3. Mao hou (hairy monkey)

The heads, hands and feet of these figures are made of cicada shells and their bodies of magnolia buds. They are often put in poses that imitate scenes from life in China's past.

4. Sugar figures

Thick sugar is put on a copper spoon and heated over charcoal until caramelized. Then a small ball of the sugar is put at the end of reed straw, through which the craftsman blows to expand the sugar into a ball. The ball is then shaped by hand to look like people or animals.

5. Kong zhu (empty bamboo)

This traditional toy and test of dexterity comes in single and two-wheeled versions, all of which are made of wooden boards sealed tightly with bamboo strips. The more common double-wheeled version tapers

to a thin middle, which is balanced and moved up and down a long string held by sticks attached at each end. As the wheel races along the string, it makes loud whirring sounds though strategically placed holes.

6. Zou ma deng (walking horse lantern)

This primitive movie depicts a horse walking. A candle is placed in the middle of a cylinder containing progressive pictures of a horse moving, and in which slats are carefully cut. By spinning the cylinder and looking through the slats, viewers can watch the horse galloping away.

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By Wenlong

The arrival of Spring Festival means people nationwide will be diving into large plates of steaming dumplings, especially in northern China. There, *jiaozi* are a staple food and a holiday essential.

Chinese dumplings have legendary origins, having supposedly been created in the late years of the Eastern Han Period by a medical expert named Zhang Zhongjing, who wanted to forge a food that would help the poor stay warm and healthy during the cold winter. The original version was made with mutton, hot pepper and some medicinal materials, and served after being boiled. Eventually, that food turned into *jiaozi*.

Nowadays dumplings make an appearance on the tables of homes around the country for New Year. Generally, families get together to *bao jiaozi*, or wrap dumplings, before midnight on the last day of the passing lunar year and eat the little treats after ringing in the New Year.

Because they look like the gold and silver ingots formerly used in China, dumplings are supposed to bring fortune and good luck. In many families, sweets are added to one or two dumplings, with wishes for a prosperous life, or even having a baby, going to the lucky eaters. Such sweet surprises normally take the shape of Chinese dates or chestnuts.

Other families like to bury a coin in one of their dumplings. The person who gets the special *jiaozi* should experience good fortune over the next year, hopefully not at the cost of broken teeth.

Dumplings come either boiled or steamed, with the steamed variety more popular in northern China. Today, chefs in restaurants around the city have picked up on the popularity of these earthy favorites and started to recreate *jiaozi* through their culinary ingenuity and artistry.

Some of these fancier dumplings even seem to defy all physical law. The flour-based wrappers of special shrimp *jiaozi* are so translucent that their fillings are completely visible. More remarkable are soup dumplings, marvels of culinary engineering in which a portion of soup is magically sealed inside a gossamer skin and steamed without leaking a single drop.



Photos by Zhuang Jian

Yowza, *Jiaozi*!

Dongfang Jiaoziwang

The meaning of the eatery's name, "Dumpling King of the Orient", is a bold claim in the capital market, since the restaurant from northeastern Heilongjiang Province only landed in Beijing last April. Now the catering group has opened two branches in the city, both along Lishi Road.



The two restaurants serve dumplings in a clean, fast food style environment. "Young people like western fast food, but not Chinese-style food. The management of KFC and McDonald's has set examples for us, so we are aiming to attract people with traditional food and a cozy atmosphere," said restaurant manager Wang Yingbin.

The restaurants are indeed comfortable, with efficient wait staff, clean facilities and big photos of juicy dumplings on the wall.

After taking their seats, diners are given two small plates of free cold dishes, one bowl of boiled dumpling soup, and an order form. The restaurants offer 28 kinds of dumplings that come either boiled and steamed. English menus are available.

Prices are low, as a plate with 50-grams of dumplings cost from 3 to 12 yuan. The most expensive is the shark fin with seafood dumplings (*yuchi haixian tangjiao*), which go for 68 yuan for six. More standard versions, such as dumplings filled with shrimp, shrimp roe, and meat (*sanshian tangjiao*), fetch 3.5 yuan per half dozen. The menu also includes light fried dumplings (*guotie*).

Each table has a cruet-stand with soy sauce, hot pepper oil, ground garlic, vinegar, and in a special touch, mustard, to make personalized sauces.

Add: No. 25 Nanlishi Lu, Xicheng District **Open:** 10 am – 10 pm **Tel:** 6805 8733 **Average cost:** 30 yuan per person



Tianjin Baijiaoyuan

A Shanghai Great World Record was awarded to this restaurant in 2001 for creating 229 kinds of dumplings. The company was started in March 1997, and

has since opened dozens of restaurants around the country. The Beijing branch is the largest.

There are around 100 kinds of dumplings currently on the menu, divided into ten main categories according to filling, such as pork, seafood, vegetarian and poultry. Dumplings are sold by the ten-count and go for 6 to 28 yuan. English menus are available.

Among the more bizarre dumpling offerings are ones with fillings of Chinese wolfberry and ox penis (19 yuan per ten), duck blood or corn. This huge restaurant also does credible dishes, while its dumplings are made even better by a wide range of choices for making one's own dipping sauce.

Add: No. 12 Xinwenhua Jie, Xuanwu District **Open:** 10 am – 2:30 pm, 4:30 pm – 9:30 pm **Tel:** 6605 9371 **Average cost:** 32 yuan per person



This two-story eatery serves 57 kinds of boiled dumplings, as well as roast duck and Sichuan and Cantonese-style dishes. Don't let its plain décor put you off – the dumplings are excellent and cheap.

The most expensive dumplings are the shrimp variety, which go for 120 yuan per kilogram, while other specialties like fish meat dumplings fetch 80 yuan per kilogram and lotus root with pork cost 52 yuan.

In its more than 10 years of business, the restaurant has expanded its dumpling range while improving quality and control. Baiweixiang can seat around 300. Besides the dumplings, its seafood dishes are also worth a try. Either way, the name of the game here is cheap.

Add: No. 33, Xueyuan Nanlu, Haidian District **Open:** 11 am – 9:30 pm **Tel:** 6211 8585 **Average cost:** 25 yuan per person

Longtan Jiaozi Haixiancheng
This huge restaurant specializes in two things: dumplings and seafood. It offers 25 kinds of dumplings, sold by the *liang*, (50 grams), starting from three yuan per liang. One liang equals five dumplings.

The restaurant follows Cantonese style to make delicate dumplings appropriate for dim sum. The fillings are also of a high order, made of such refined ingredients as shark fin, abalone



and other treasures of the sea.

The restaurant's special homemade fruit tea offers a different way to wash down the dumplings. The sweet-sour drink is made of a mixture of fruit, black tea and honey.

The two-story establishment has an old-fashioned style, with red columns and carved windows, while its parking lot is large enough to accommodate around 100 cars.

Add: No. 4 Huizhong Beili, Asian Games Village, Chaoyang District **Open:** 11 am – 2:30 pm, 5 pm – 10 pm **Tel:** 6485 8038 **Average cost:** 30 yuan per person

Recipes:

Vegetarian Dumplings

Ingredients: 1/2 cup cooked spinach, 1 cup bread crumbs, 1/2 cup cheese, 2 chopped garlic cloves, 1 egg, 3 tablespoons unbleached flour, 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese, salt and pepper to taste.

Squeeze spinach to drain water. Then mix all ingredients together.

Fashion small balls of the mixture, then bundle them in the middle of wonton wrappers. Boil in broth or water until the dumplings float, then turn off heat and drain.

Chinese Dumplings

2 uncooked turkey sausages, 500 grams shelled raw shrimp, 500 grams uncooked ground chicken, chopped green onion to taste, 1/2 cup fine chopped Chinese cabbage, 1 tablespoon soy sauce.

First, remove skin from the



sausages. In a bowl, use a fork to work together the sausage and chicken meat. Then add the uncooked shrimp (chopped if large, whole if small), followed by the remaining ingredients.

Place a spoonful of the mixture in the center of round a dumpling wrapper or wonton wrapper. Pinch or fold to fashion desired dumpling shape. Boil or steam until done.

Dumpling Diversity

By Wenlong

China by no means has a monopoly on dumplings. In a wide variety of forms, dumplings are also popular fare in many other countries.

Russian dumplings

The filling of *piroshki*, Russian dumplings, is normally made of a mixture of beef, carrots, eggs, onion and pepper. They are boiled in beef broth. When served, the broth comes out first, as a soup, followed by the dumplings.

Indian dumplings

Indian dumplings are called *samosas*. They come with many different kinds of ingredients, often vegetarian mixtures like peppers, potato and peas, and instead of being boiled are deep-fried.

Mexican dumplings

These dumplings are filled with onion, beef, tomato and celery, and are formed into rectangular shapes from corn-based dough. The dumplings are normally served in a spicy tomato-based soup.

Korean dumplings

Like many Korean foods, *mandoo*, or dumplings, are often very spicy. They come filled with beef and loads of peppers and are boiled or steamed.



Vietnamese dumplings

Dumplings from Vietnam often are lighter than their Chinese cousins. They come filled with fish, pork, and egg and orange skin and are boiled.

Italian dumplings

Better known as *ravioli*, these dumplings normally come with a filling of cheese, onion, and egg yolk, but there are many other varieties including meat and spinach. The dumplings are formed from two square pieces of pasta dough and are boiled.

Hungarian dumplings

In Hungary, dumplings are known as *galuska*, and tend to be sweet, with fillings made from jam, plum, and apricot. The dough for the wrappers is a mixture of flour and mashed potato. They come boiled or steamed.

Dining Out

By Wesley Lei

Summer Palace Restaurant China World Hotel

Hot Pot Reunion Dinner on January 31 with at least 78 items on the buffet spread, in the vegetables, fish and meat balls, sauces, seafood and meat sections, along with drinks. Special set dinners in private rooms priced at 288, 388, 588, or 688 yuan per person. **Tel:** 6505 2266 ext. 34

Noble Court

Grand Hyatt Beijing

Celebrate the Year of the Sheep in high style and spirit. Set menus and special Chinese New Year a la carte menu available. **Cost:** Special Chinese New Year set menu at 388 yuan or 688 yuan per person plus 15 percent service charge. **When:** 9:30 am – 11 pm, January 31 – February 15 **Tel:** 8518 1234

Reunion Night Dinner

The Kerry Centre Hotel

Enjoy the special buffet reunion dinner at the Coffee Garden, complemented by a selection of starters and desserts. Try Sichuan or Cantonese cuisine at the Horizon Chinese Restaurant for a happy reunion night. Enjoy a great family get-together and win exciting lucky draw prizes, including a DVD player. **When:** 6 pm onwards, January 31. **Cost:** 188 yuan plus 15 percent per person, or 300 yuan for two adults and one child. **Tel:** 6561 8833 ext. 40/41

Traders Café

Traders Hotel Beijing

Yusheng is a Nanyang Chinese specialty of thinly sliced salmon sashimi and assorted vegetables with homemade sauces. It's believed to bring good fortune when consumed during Spring Festival. The traditional way to eat *yusheng* is to toss it high in the air and make a wish for the New Year. **When:** February 1 – 15 **Cost:** 88 yuan per portion, subject to 15 percent service charge. **Tel:** 6505 2277 ext. 35

Atrium

Hilton Hotel Beijing

Don't miss the sumptuous lunch and dinner buffet with plenty of Chinese delicacies! On February 1 and 2, there will be a dumpling-making competition among diners at Atrium, with prizes of unlimited dim sum lunch in Sui Yuan for two given to two winners each day. Traditional Lion Dances will be held on Chinese New Year's Day, February 1, at noon in the Hotel Lobby. **When:** January 31 – February 9 **Tel:** 6466 2288 ext. 7370

Oysters Promotion

Jiangguo Hotel

Oyster delicacies will be featured at Justine's throughout February, with a selection including Sydney Rock, Fine de Claire No. 3, Fine de Claire No. 2 and live pacific oysters for all you oyster lovers! **When:** February 3 – 28 **Tel:** 6500 2233 ext. 8039.

Choucroute Alsacienne

The Café Restaurant

The famous dish of sauerkraut with pork sausages and pork knuckle from the eastern region of Alsace in France will be served daily at the Café restaurant throughout February. **When:** February 3 – 28 **Tel:** 6500 2233 ext. 8040

Dragon Palace

Kempinski Hotel Lufthansa Center

Celebrate Chinese New Year with Master Chef So Soon Kim as he prepares festive favorites and set menus symbolizing fortune, health and prosperity. Prepare your own dumplings and win wonderful prizes. Watch a traditional Lion Dance in the hotel's lobby. Join in the festivities as Dragon Palace presents culinary pleasures and true Asian hospitality at its best. **When:** January 31 – February 15, lunch 11:30 am – 2 pm, dinner 5:30 pm – 10 pm; Chinese Festival Evening Celebration 5:30 pm to 10:30 pm, January 31 **Tel:** 6465 3388 ext. 4108

Downtown Ice Show

An ice and snow sculpture show is now on display at Ditan Park. This is the second year that ice sculptures from Harbin have been displayed in the park. These sculptures are in a variety of shapes and sizes including Olympic logos, courtyards, lanterns as well as models of well known places such as the and Temple of Heaven and the Forbidden City.

Where: Ditan Park, Dongcheng
When: till February 30 **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6427 3127



Movies

When the Spouse was Abroad

Directed by Sun Sha, starring Ge Yu. Two couples from Beijing are temporarily separated when one-half of each couple leaves to study abroad. The two who are left behind meet by chance and gradually become good friends as both are forced to confront the pressures and frustrations of living alone in modern-day China. In spite of their best intentions they are drawn closer together and their lives become complicated but much more interesting. Chinese with English subtitles.

Where: Cherry Lane Movies, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu **When:** February 7-8, 8 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 6430 1398 **Email:** michael@cherrylanemovies.com.cn

La Forza Del Destino

Conducted by James Levine, music by Giuseppe Verdi, libretto by Francesco Maria Piave. Features Richard Vernon, Leontyne Price, Giuseppe Giacomini, Leo Nucci, Performed by Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus. La Forza Del Destino is Verdi's panoramic tragedy of honor and vengeance in 18th century Spain and Italy. Its characters, ranging from aristocrats to camp followers, from soldiers to monks are all swept up in the irresistible power of destiny. Italian with English subtitles.

Where: Italian Embassy Cultural Office **When:** February 6, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187 **Email:** italcult@public.bta.net

Sunflower (Il Girasoli)

Directed by Vittorio De Sica, starring Sophia Loren, Marcello Mastroianni. An Italian soldier does not return from WWII and his wife eventually goes to Russia to find him many years after the war ended, only to dramatically find him living with another woman in Ukraine. In despair, she returns to Italy alone.

Where: Italian Embassy Cultural Office **When:** February 13, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187 **Email:** italcult@public.bta.net



Guy Pearce(left)

Memento

Directed by Christopher Nolan, starring Guy Pearce. After a man and his wife are assaulted, the wife dies and he sustains a severe head injury and impaired memory. Seeking to avenge the death of his wife, he sets out to find the killer. English with Chinese subtitles.

Where: Space for Imagination, 5 Xiwangzhuang Haidian **When:** February 1, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6279 1280

Der Blaue Engel

Directed by Josef Von Sternberg, starring Marlene Dietrich. An old fashioned man meets a woman named Laura, and falls in love with her. But he loses his mind unable to bear the thought that she might be unfaithful to him. German with Chinese subtitles.

Where: Space for Imagination, 5 Xiwangzhuang Haidian **When:** February 8, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6279 1280

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By Guo Yuanfan

Sports

Great Wall—Eight towers high

This is a flexible walk on a stretch of the Great Wall to the west of Shentangu Valley. Our local guide will take us along on the wall, passing eight guard towers and then back from a valley. Those who want an easier walk can hike along the wall with the main group as far as they want and come back the same way.

Where: Huairou, north of Beijing
When: February 2, meet 8:30 am outside Starbucks at Lido Hotel, or 9 am at Capital Paradise front gate, return 5 pm **Cost:** adults 150 yuan, children 100 yuan **Tel:** 13701 003694 **Email:** bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk

Scenic hike

The highest point of this hike is the pass, which makes a perfect lunch spot. It is over 800 meters above sea level. The start of the hike is about 100 meters. The trail is clear and well maintained, offering great views along the way. It takes about four hours to complete, including a break for lunch and a look around the temples.

Where: Mentougou, west of Beijing
When: February 9, meet 8:30 am outside Starbucks at Lido Hotel, or 9 am at Capital Paradise front gate, return 5 pm **Cost:** adults 150 yuan, children 100 yuan **Tel:** 13701 003694 **Email:** bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk

Stage

The Dragon and the Phoenix Bringing Prosperity

Performed by Beijing Opera Troupe, featuring Lin Qing, Du Zhenjie, Zhu Qiang, Huang Paixue, Zhang Dahuan, Chen Junjie, Wang Rongrong, Li Hongtu, Han Shengcun, Han Juming and Kang Erming.

Where: Chang'an Grand Theatre, 7 Jianguomennei Dajie, Dongcheng
When: February 1, 1:30 pm **Admission:** 60, 100, 180 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7750 ext 508

Hotel Deal

New Year Promotional Rates

Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts is offering up to 60 percent discounts on room rates as part of a special promotion. Available at all Shangri-La and Traders hotels.

Where: Shangri-La Hotel **When:** January 30–February 8 **Tel:** 6561 8833 **Fax:** 8529 9919 **Email:** judyw@shangri-la.com

And Here...

Grand Hyatt is offering discounts of up to 50 percent. Enjoy the rainforest style swimming pool.

Where: Grand Hyatt, Oriental Plaza, Chang'an Avenue **When:** till February 28 **Tel:** 8518 1234 **Email:** grandhyattbeijing@hyattintl.com

New Year Room Package

US \$75 for an executive floor deluxe room for single or double occupancy, complimentary daily breakfast, snacks and evening cocktails and downtown shuttle bus service. Free use of sauna, gym and steam room and 20 percent discount on laundry, dry cleaning and pressing services included. Only available to expatriates in China.

Where: Rosedale Hotel and Suites Beijing, 8 Jiangtai Xilu, Chaoyang **When:** January 31–February 7 **Tel:** 6436 2288 **Email:** hotel@rosedalebj.com

Exhibitions

Oil Show

Feng Feng's oil paintings feature a combination of ancient and modern, using magnificent "royal paints" such as orange, dark, green and rich mauves. Li Qiang's oil paintings focus on the changes in society and life over 20 years of opening up.

Where: Qin Gallery, Huaweili Enjoy Paradise1-1E (North of Beijing Curio City) Chaoyang **When:** February 1–February 28, 9:30 am–7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461



Painting by Feng Feng

Beauty of Landscape

The exhibition features work by landscape artist, Ran Jingling, with subjects such as southern towns in the rain, bamboo houses in coconut palms and villages.

Where: Melodic Art Gallery, 14 Jianguomenwei Dajie, opposite Beijing Friendship Store **When:** February 1-28, 9 am–5 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6515 8123



Fly Horse by Jia Haoyi

Collection Exhibition

The exhibition features a collection of oil paintings, prints and wash paintings by many famous painters.

Where: Creation Gallery, north end of Ritan Donglu, Chaoyang **When:** January 31–February 28, 10 am–7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8561 7570.

Beauty Shadow

Li Qingwen, a graduate of the Xi'an Academy of Art, has been painting for 13 years. His works are collected in Hong Kong, Germany, Austria and the Philippines. This exhibition features his latest oil paintings.

Where: Fa Fa Gallery, 2 Xiangjiang Beilu, Jingshun Lu Quanfa Garden Clubhouse, Chaoyang **When:** February 1-15, 9 am–10 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8430 2587



Sun by Li Qingwen

Parties

Sand

Celebrate the New Year at *Sand (Sazi)* with live music.

Where: "What," opposite north gate of Business and Economics University, Chaoyang **When:** January 31, 9 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 13910 209249

More Bands at Get Lucky!

Friday night features *Spring and Autumn (Chunqiu)*, *Mirage (Hanshishenglu)*, *Black Diamond (Haizhuanshi)* and a mystery band. Saturday night, *PK14*, *No Color* and *Cool Fairyland*.

Where: Get Lucky, 500 meters east of the south gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** February 7 and 8, 9 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6429 9109

Dancing Queen Party

Featuring music from the 70s and 80s. Clubbers should dress up and be prepared to dance to the funkiest sounds provided by Beijing's hottest DJs, including Weng Weng. Make-up artists, fashion advisers and disco divas will be on hand to help you obtain that authentic 70s look.

Where: Yan Club, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** February 1, 7 pm **Ad-**

mission: 30 yuan, including transportation to and from Workers' Stadium **Tel:** 8457 3622

Jazz Band

Liu Yuan Jazz Band are back
Where: CD Cafe, Dongsanhuan Lu, Chaoyang **When:** January 31, 9 pm **Tel:** 6501 8877 ext 3032

Performance

Carmen

Flamenco, an individualistic yet structured form of folk dance from Andalusia, in Spain, is often improvised and spontaneous. The song, dance and guitar blend together with the passionate rhythms of southern Spain. The tragic lyrics and tones of flamenco reflect the sufferings of the gypsy people.

Where: Beijing Exhibition Theatre **When:** February 2-7, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80, 180, 280, 380, 480, 580 yuan **Tel:** 6567 5049

La Santa Luz Dance Company

La Santa Luz (meaning holy light) is a new and innovative dance company that effectively combines elements of jazz, modern dance, ballet, tap, flamenco, African dance, Latin and sign language to inspire and motivate.

Where: Nationality Cultural Palace Theatre **When:** February 2-4, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80, 180, 280, 380, 480, 580 yuan **Tel:** 6598 7674 ext 508

La Traviata

The Moscow State Ballet Theatre headed by Lilia Sabitova was established in 1990. The company actively tours the world and has participated in various international arts festivals.

Where: Tianqiao Theater **When:** February 2-3, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80, 180, 280, 380, 480, 580 yuan **Tel:** 6598 7674 ext 508

Chinese dance drama

The story of *Silu Huayu* reflects some of the traditional art of Dunhuang, the dancing's timeless appeal lies in its combination of elements from the Tang dynasty and the Dunhuang region

Where: Century Theatre **When:** February 2-4, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80, 180, 280, 380, 580, 800 yuan **Tel:** 6598 7674 ext 508

Tea House

Modern drama adaptation of classic work by Lao She. *Tea House* has developed into a tradition of realistic performances combined with a strong Beijing cultural flavor.

Where: Capital Theatre **When:** February 2-7, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 100, 120, 150, 200 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7674 ext 198

The Prince of the Magic City

Las Vegas' very own Brett Daniels, will wield his wand during Chinese New Year to give local audiences a taste of his illusions.

Where: Worker's Gymnasium **When:** February 3-8, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 380, 480, 680, 880, 1080, 1280 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7674 ext 508

Activities

Magic fun

Magic invites you to the mini-carnival and magic classes. Birthday clown, magician, face painting and prize bags. Bilingual fun for all ages.

Where: Chaoyang Park **When:** February 1-7, 10: 30 am–5 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 13910 626059 **Email:** parsons59@yahoo.com

Festival Celebration

Spring Festival Celebrations have already started in Yaoqiao Village and will continue until March 5. Local traditions are still observed here. During the Spring Festival, tourists can live in the castle, set off firecrackers and try their hand at making bean curd, writing spring couplets and greeting the fortune god. There is also hunting at nearby Yunxiu Village, skating at Wuling Lake and the scenery of snow-covered Wuling Mountain to enjoy.

Where: Yaoqiao Valley, Miyun **When:** till March 5 **Cost:** 15 yuan for accommodation, 25 yuan for meals including breakfast, lunch and dinner **Getting there:** Take a bus to Miyun from Dongzhimen Long Distance Bus Station, then change to a bus for Xinchengzi Yaoqiao Village.

Ferry Good Fun

Lunar New Year celebration at Shidu (Ten Ferries) Scenic Spot will run between the Lunar New Year Eve and the 15th day of the lunar year (January 30 to February 15). Enjoy beautiful scenery, see the icy waterfall, stay in a farmhouse and eat local food.

Where: Shidu (Ten Ferries), Fangshan **When:** February 1-15 **Cost:** 10-20 yuan **Getting there:** Take bus No. 917 to Shidu from Tianqiao Bus Station **Tel:** 6134 0520

Modern country house

Spend the Spring Festival at Hancunhe Village, the richest countryside area around Beijing. Live in

a farmhouse, make dumplings, sing and dance, set off firecrackers and pick fruit and vegetables. There will be special performances between the February 3 and 5.

Where: Hancunhe Village, Fangshan **When:** February 1-15 **Cost:** 25-195 yuan **Getting there:** take bus 917 from Tianqiao Bus Station **Tel:** 8038 0015

Cracker Party

This will be the seventh fireworks party to be held at the Waxworks Palace of the Ming Dynasty in Changping. Lucky draws and a free visit to the palace for those who spend over 400 yuan on firecrackers. The Ming Garden Restaurant introduces the Palace Dumpling Dinner, the Ming Loyal Dinner, the Ming Loyal Special dinner, including free firecrackers, of course, as well as the Ming Loyal Campfire Party at Ming Palace Square.

Where: Waxworks Palace of the Ming Dynasty, Changping **When:** January 31, 8–February, 1 3 am **Admission:** 40 yuan **Getting there:** take bus 919 from Deshengmen **Tel:** 6974 7257

Foreign Temple Fair

See genuine western-style performances, visit the book fair, buy festival souvenirs, and sample local snacks.

Where: Shijingshan Amusement Park **When:** February 1-15 **Admission:** 5 yuan **Tel:** 6887 4060

Music

Folk Concert

Performed by the Traditional Music Orchestra of the Beijing Song and Dance Troupe.

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall **When:** February 1, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80, 120, 180, 220, 280, 380, 480, yuan 4,000 yuan (VIP) **Tel:** 6528 7674 ext 198

Orchestra Concert

Performed by the Orchestra of Song and Dance Ensemble of the General Political Department of the People's Liberation Army, Conductor: Zen Jian. Program includes *Walk Bijou*, *Nightingale*, *Blue Flowers*, *Emperor*, *The Power of Fate*, *Light Cavalry* and more.

Where: Nationality Culture Palace Theatre **When:** February 6, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80, 180, 280, 380, 480 Yuan **Tel:** 6528 7674 ext 198

Blue Love

Performed by China Light Music Troupe, conductor Yang Chunking. Performances include *Blue Love*, *Give you a Rose*, *Remember*, *Under silver Moonlight*, *Pigeon* and other popular foreign songs.

Where: Century Theatre **When:** February 5, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 60, 90, 120, 180, 280, 380, 500 yuan **Tel:** 6598 7674 ext 508

Spring Concert

Many Chinese folk music will be performed by The Young Musicians Philharmonic.

Where: Concert Hall of China National Library, Zhongguancun Nandajie **When:** February 2, 2:30 pm **Admission:** 40, 70, 100, 120, 150, 200, 280 yuan **Tel:** 8854 5520

Ballet Tunes

Music from ballets performed by the orchestra of the Song and Dance Ensemble of the General Political Department of the People's Liberation Army. Conducted by Niu Jie. Program includes *The White haired Girl*, *The Red Detachment of Women*, *The Blue Danube*, and *Emperor's Waltz*.

Where: Concert Hall of China National Library, Zhongguancun Nandajie **When:** February 2, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 40, 70, 100, 120, 150, 200, 280 yuan **Tel:** 8854 5520, 6841 9220

Violin Concert

Sheng Zhongguo, one of China's most renown violinists, will perform *Butterfly Lovers* by He Zhaozhao and Chen Gang, along with works by Debussy, Liszt and Wang Luobin.

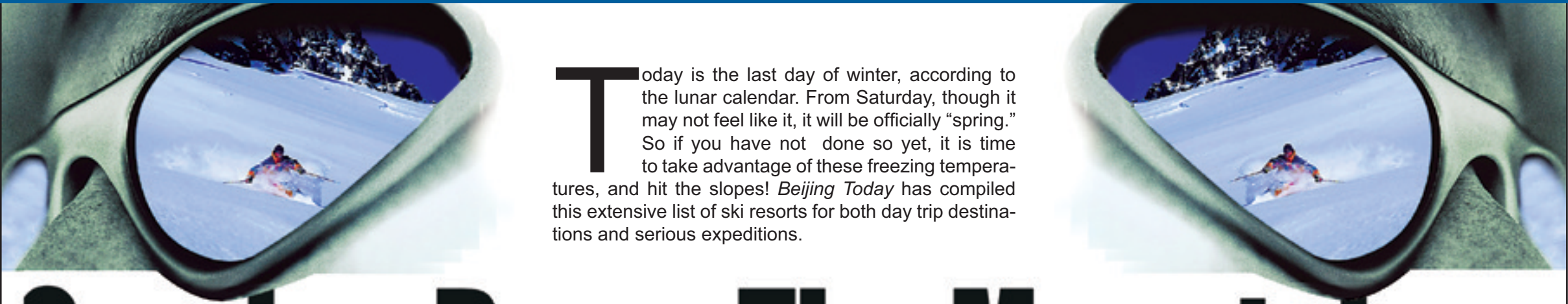
Where: Concert Hall of China National Library, Zhongguancun Nandajie **When:** February 5, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 40, 70, 100, 120, 150, 200, 280 yuan **Tel:** 8854 5520, 6841 9220

Lecture

Temple Fair Tour

Join Chinese Culture Club group for a half-day tour of the two leading spots of Beijing's popular temple fairs. The ancient custom of holding temple fairs to offer sacrifices at New Year has developed into a modern five-day festival, with food, dance, games and souvenir stalls

Where: meet at the lobby of China World Hotel to take bus. **When:** February 2, 1:30-5 pm **Admission:** 50 yuan (including tickets and transportation) **Tel:** 8851 4913



Coming Down The Mountain...

Skiing around Beijing

By Huang Lisha

Huairou Huaibei International Ski Resort (怀柔怀北国际滑雪场)

Features: There are five lifts and six ski runs at the resort, one advanced, one mid-level, and four elementary.

There is a skating-rink and an ice sculpture exhibition at nearby Longqingxia (Longqing Canyon). The 1,000-year-old Hongluo Temple (红螺寺), one of China's holiest Buddhist sites, is just 10 kilometers away from the resort. There will be a temple fair there during the Spring Festival period.

Getting there: The ski resort is 50 kilometers from Beijing. Take the Airport Expressway to the Beigao (北皋) exit and head north on State Highway 111 through Huairou. Keep going until you see the sign for the resort, which lies at the foot of the Great Wall.

Alternatively, take bus 936 from Dongzhimen long distance bus station directly to the resort (7 yuan).

How much: Weekdays: 60 yuan per hour, 160 yuan per half day, 240 yuan per day

Weekends and holidays: 80 yuan per hour, 190 yuan per half day, 340 yuan per day

Entry to resort: 20 yuan
Ski wear hire: 30 yuan
Tel: 6966 1177

Miyun Nanshan Ski Village (密云南山滑雪度假村)

Features: There are three chairlifts, and three ski runs; beginner, intermediate and advanced. It also boasts China's first mogul run, and a children's snow mobile track.

Getting there: Nanshan is about 70 kilometers, or a one-hour drive, from downtown Beijing. Take Jingmi Lu (京密路) from Siyuan Qiao on the Third Ring Road, as far as the Kaifanghuandao (开放环岛) exit, then turn right onto Xidaqiao Lu (西大桥路). Head east to Miyun County. From there, follow the signs to the resort.

Alternatively, take the Miyun bus from Dongzhimen (10 yuan), then the No. 13 minibus (2 yuan) or a taxi (10 yuan) to the resort.

How much: Weekdays: 100 yuan per 2 hours, 220 yuan per day

Weekends and holidays: 140 yuan per 2 hours, 340 yuan per day,

Weekly ticket: 1,070 yuan or 1,550 during holidays

Entry to resort: 20 yuan (30 yuan during Spring Festival)
Ski wear hire: 30 yuan
Tel: 6445 0991

Beijing Xueshijie Ski Resort (昌平雪世界滑雪场)

Features: There are three lifts and four runs; one advanced, one intermediate and two beginner.

Ski lessons are offered at the resort. There is also a large ice sculpture exhibition area in Xueshijie.

Getting there: Situated right beside the Ming Tombs, Xueshijie is 36 kilometers, or 30 minutes drive from Madian Qiao on the North Third Ring Road.

Alternative, take bus 345专 from Deshengmen bus station to Zhengfa Daxue; then No. 3 minibus from the opposite side of the road to Xueshijie.

How much: Weekdays: 50 yuan per hour, 140 yuan per half day, 220 yuan per day

Weekends and holidays: 70 yuan per hour, 190 yuan per half day, 340 yuan per day

Entry to resort: 18 yuan
Tel: 8976 1899

Miyun Yunfoshan Ski Resort (密云云佛山滑雪场)

Features: There are two advanced, three intermediate and four elementary ski runs.

Getting there: Head out Jingshun Lu (京顺路) from Sanyuan Qiao on the Third Ring Road. At the Miyun turnoff, turn left. You will come to the resort several minutes later.

Alternatively, take the bus to Yunfoshan from Dongzhimen long distance bus station (10 yuan).

How much: Weekdays: 50 yuan per hour

Weekends and holidays: 70 yuan per hour

Ski wear hire: 30 yuan
Entry to resort: 20 yuan
Tel: 6901 6895

Shijinglong Ski Resort (延庆石京龙滑雪场)

Features: Opening for business four years ago, Shijinglong was Beijing's first ski resort, and boasts advanced, intermediate and beginner runs. It is an ideal place for beginners and mid-level skiers. There is also a hot spring here, just the thing for soaking away the aches and bruises from a long day on the slopes.

Getting there: Shijinglong is a two-hour-drive from downtown Beijing. Take the Badaling Expressway and turn right at the Yanqing exit. Follow the signs, and you will reach the resort in another 10 minutes.

How much: Weekdays: 60 yuan per hour, 160 yuan per half day, 260 yuan per day

Weekends and holidays: 80 yuan per hour, 220 yuan per half day, 360 yuan per day

Tel: 6919 1615

Beijing Longfengshan Ski Resort (门头沟龙凤山冰雪乐园)

Features: There is a good

Today is the last day of winter, according to the lunar calendar. From Saturday, though it may not feel like it, it will be officially "spring."

So if you have not done so yet, it is time to take advantage of these freezing temperatures, and hit the slopes! *Beijing Today* has compiled this extensive list of ski resorts for both day trip destinations and serious expeditions.



beginners slope here (less than 17 degrees) and professional instructors on hand for lessons. Two ancient temples, Tantuo (潭柘寺) and Jietai (戒台寺) can be found next to the resort.

Getting there: Take the subway to Pingguoyuan, then bus 931 to Longfeng Shanzhuang (龙凤山庄), from where there are free buses to the resort.

How much: Weekdays: 50 yuan per hour, 150 yuan per half day, 220 yuan per day

Weekends: 70 yuan per hour, 180 yuan per half day, 320 yuan per day

Holidays: 80 yuan per hour, 220 yuan per half day, 420 yuan per day

Entry to resort: 20 yuan
Ski wear hire: 20 yuan
Tel: 6980 4549

Zhangjiakou Saibei Ski Resort (河北张家口塞北滑雪场)

Features: There are 10 ski runs of varying levels of difficulty at this resort.

Getting there: Take the Badaling Expressway to the end, where it becomes the Jingzhang Expressway (京张高速路), continue to the Zhangjiakou exit, then head north, through Chongli County (崇礼县). Continue driving until you see a bridge on your right, on which there is a sign for the ski resort. Total drive time is about three hours. There are also daily buses (100 yuan) from Longtanhu Park (龙潭湖北京游乐园), in Chongwen District, to the resort.

How much: 60 yuan per hour, 150 yuan per half day, 300 yuan per day

Entry to resort: 30 yuan
Ski wear hire: 30 yuan
Tel: 6711 2847

Hebei Cuiyunshan Ski Resort (河北翠云山雪场)

Features: There are six ski runs at Cuiyunshan, ranging from beginner to advanced.

Getting there: Take the Badaling Expressway

then the Jingzhang Expressway as far as the Zhangjiakou exit. Follow the signs to Dajingmen (大镜门), then to Chongli County. Look out for a sign pointing to the ski resort on the right; it is about 20 minutes from there. Alternatively, take a train from Beijing South Railway Station (K217) to Zhangjiakou (30 yuan), then a bus to the resort (20 yuan).

How much: 30 yuan per hour

Ski wear hire: 25 yuan
Entry to resort: 30 yuan
Tel: 0313-4616070

Hebei Saihanba Ski Resort (塞罕坝滑雪场)

Features: There are three ski runs here, 700 meters, 1000 meters and 1,500 meters, of increasing levels of difficulty.

Getting there: Drive to Chengde (about 300 kilometers) via the Jingmi Highway then the Jingcheng Highway (京承公路). Continue on to Weichang County (围场县). Follow the signs north to the ski resort

Alternatively, take train 2559 from Beijing South Railway Station to Siyonghe (四永合), from where there are daily buses (60 yuan, round trip) to the resort.

How much: Weekdays: 50 yuan per hour, 150 yuan per half day, 220 yuan per day

Weekends and holidays: 70 yuan per hour, 170 yuan per half day, 260 yuan per day

Ski wear hire: 30 yuan per half day, 45 yuan per day
Entry to resort: 20 yuan
Tel: 0314-7802222

Ski Resorts in Northeast China

By Huang Lisha

Longzhu Erlongshan Ski Resort (龙珠二龙山滑雪场) - a paradise for beginners

Located in Bin County (宾县), Heilongjiang Province, this resort is 65 kilometers from provincial capital Harbin. Erlongshan features two beginner runs and eight intermediate to advanced runs. The two beginner runs are much the same, and offer scenic views. There are also sled runs, motor-toboggan runs, and a snowboarding area. There are cable cars up to the resort, and guests can put on their skis as soon as they are out of the hotel.

Getting there: There are daily air-conditioned buses from Harbin. It takes about one hour to reach the resort hotel.

Tips: Temperatures in winter tend to be -15℃ to -18℃, so bring plenty of insulation. Check their website www.longzhuski.net for more information.

Yabuli Ski Resort (亚布力滑雪场) - Come on, ski masters!

1,374-meters above sea level, Yabuli Ski Resort is 195 kilometers east of Harbin. This is China's premier ski resort, in terms of ski run variety, quantity, and length. There are advanced, intermediate, and beginner runs, as well as cross-country trails. There are eleven runs over one kilometer long, among which the five-kilometer No. 5 run is reputedly the longest in Asia.

Getting there: Take the train K409 or K411 from Harbin to Yabuli (50 yuan). It is about a two hour trip, and then a minibus (10 yuan) to the resort. For more details, go to www.yabuliski.com.

Tips: As it is not that easy to get to, Yabuli is best enjoyed if you have several days to spare, three is the suggested minimum. Bear in mind that temperatures can fall as low as -44℃!

Meihuashanzhuang Ski Resort (梅花山庄滑雪场)

1,047-meters-high above sea level, the ski resort is located in the Xiaoxing'anling Mountains, 28 kilometers east of Yichun (伊春), Heilongjiang Province. There are many ski runs here, one of which is one kilometer long.

Getting there: Take the K339 Beijing-Jiamusi (佳木斯) train to Tieli (铁力), Heilongjiang, then

the bus to Yichun, or take the Harbin-Wuyiling (乌伊岭) train to Yichun.

Mudanfeng Ski Resort (牡丹峰滑雪场)

Lying in the Mudanfang Nature Reserve, the ski resort is only 15 kilometers from downtown Mudanjiang City (牡丹江市), Heilongjiang. Here you can ski through breathtakingly beautiful forest scenery.

Getting there: The No. 24 bus departs Mudanjiang's Beilong (北龙) bus station for Mudanfang National Forest Park every ten minutes. From there, change to the regular ski resort bus.

Beidahu Ski Resort (北大湖滑雪场) - a real alpine ski resort

Neighboring the popular Songhua Lake Resort (松花湖自然风景区), Beidahu is another famous alpine ski resort in China, second only to Yabuli. Located in Yongji County (永吉县), Jilin Province, 56 kilometers from Jilin (city), Beidahu has numerous ski runs, ranging in grade from beginner to advanced.

Getting there: Buses to the ski resort depart from Jilin Railway Station. The trip takes about one hour.

Changchun Jingyuetan Ski Resort (长春净月潭滑雪场)

There are five ski runs at Jingyuetan, including beginner, intermediate and cross country.

Getting there: The resort is located in Jingyuetan National Park, only 18 kilometers from Changchun Railway Station and 23 kilometers from the airport, just 30 minutes by bus.

Changbaishan Ski Resort (长白山滑雪场)

Changbaishan, on the China, North Korea border, is one of China's largest nature reserves, and a popular sightseeing spot all year round. The ski resort, at Erdaobaihe (二道白河镇), has two alpine runs that are over 3,000 meters long. Every winter many professional skiers come for training. There is a hot spring there, the water of which can reach 82℃, perfect for unwinding after a hard day on the slopes.

Getting there: There are daily flights from Beijing to Yanji (延吉), costing 1,030 yuan. From there, take the train to the ski resort.

Alternatively, take train 2537 to Tonghua (通化) from Beijing Railway Station, then change to train 4241 to Baihe (白河) where daily buses to the ski resort are available.